

POSITION OF WOMEN  
IN  
HINDU CIVILISATION

(FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY A. D.)

Being a Thesis Submitted to the Allahabad University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## P R E F A C E

The early medieval period extending from the seventh to the twelfth century A.D. represents a distinct phase of Indian history and culture. According to Dr. Hasham, it is the least studied but most significant period. From the point of view of the position of women in society it has not yet received as much attention of scholars as it should have done. Although general accounts of, and discussions on the condition of women, covering almost all the aspects or any one of them, are available; yet not much attempt has been made at the periodwise critical and comprehensive treatment of the subject.

The growth of feudal tendency which was gaining more and more momentum during this period, had its impact on the position of women also. The institutions of courtesans, of temple-dancers, and also the system of polygamy drew considerable support and encouragement from the feudal lords. We find many women of the ruling class taking part in the affairs of the state and giving patronage to religion and education. But among that class the Sati custom had also acquired a much wider prevalence than ever before. The general position of the common women is found to have suffered deterioration in many respects. However, the enlargement of the scope of the proprietary rights of women may certainly be taken to denote a definite rise in their status.

In the present work we have not confined ourselves to general statements regarding the condition of women in the various spheres of life; we have studied the subject in the perspective of the feudalistic conditions, social and economic.

classes, and the regional variations as they existed during this period.

The data have been gleaned from contemporary literature, inscriptions and sculpture; the accounts of the foreign travellers have also been carefully utilised. Among the indigenous literary sources the Prakrit and Apabhraṃśa works have also been utilised, besides Sanskrit and Hindi works. Some hitherto unutilised works like the *Ākhyānakamanikosa* of Hemicandra Sūri, *Nāyakumāracarit* of Puṣpadanta, *Karakandācarit* of Muni Kanakāmara, *Padma Purāṇa* of Raviṣeṇa, *Mahā Purāṇa* of Jinaseṇa, and *Uttara Purāṇa* of Guṇabhadra have been drawn upon with necessary caution and care. The inscriptions of the ruling dynasties of the period, and the art of Khajurāho, Bhuvaneśvara, and of the Pālas, Senas, Pallavas, Hāṣṭrakūṭas and Colas provide valuable information about some aspects of the position of women in this period. My visit to Khajurāho during the course of this study enabled me to get first-hand information about the depiction of women in the Candella art.

The chapters of the thesis deal with women's early life and education, marriage, married life, widowhood, their position in different walks of life, their religious status, proprietary rights, and their dress, jewellery and other embellishments.

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Abbreviations

Ā.D.S.	- Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra
Āśva. G.S.	- Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra
Ā.M.K.	- Ākhyānaka Mani Koṣa
Āś. Cū.	- Āścarya Cūḍāmaṇi
A.B.O.R.I.	- <i>Annals of Bhāndarkar Oriental Research Institute</i>
A.S.I.A.R.	- Archaeological Survey of India Annual Report
B.P.	- Bhoja Prabandha
Br. Mā. Purāṇa	- Brhannāradaīya Purāṇa
Ch.	- Chapter
Dāya.	- Dāyabhāga
D.C.	- Daśakumāra Caritam
D.K.	- Dvāśrayakāvya
D.N.	- Deśināmanalā
E.I.	- Epigraphia Indica
E.C.	- Epigraphia Carnatica
G.G.	- Gīta Govinda
G.D.S.	- Gautama Dharma Sūtra
Gaut.	- - do -
Hara.	- Haradatta
H.C.	- Harśacarita
H.I.	- History of India As told by its own Historians
I.A.	- Indian Antiquary
Jñāna	- Jñānapāñcamikathā
J.R.A.S.	- Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
J.R.A.S.B.	- Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal

J.B.B.R.A.S.	- Journal of Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J.B.O.R.S.	- Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society
K.C.	- Karakapṛasariu, Amārapālacarita
Karp.	- Karpūremanjari
K.P.	- Kothakoṣa Prakaraṇa
K.M.	- Kundamālā
Kau. M.	- Kaumudinahotsava
Kuvalaya	- Kuvalayamālā
Kullūka	- Kullūka Bhaṭṭa
K.V.S.	- Kaviṇḍravecanaśamuccaya
K.S.V.	- Kavyalāṅkaraśūtravṛtti
Kuṭṭa	- Kuṭṭanīmatam
✓ K.S.S.	- Kethāseritsāgara
K.K.O.	- Kṛtyakalpataru Grhasthakāṇḍa
K.K.V.	- Kṛtyakalpataru <sup>Vyavahārikāṇḍa</sup> Vijaṇaharakāṇḍa
L.P.	- Lokhapadghaṭi
M.C.	- Mahāvīracarita
M.M.	- Mālatīmādhavam
Medh	- Meḥātithi
Mbh.	- Mahābhārata
Nārada	- Nārada Smṛti
Nāga	- Nāganandan
Naiṣadha	- Naiṣadhiyacaritam
N.C.	- Navasahasāṅkacaritam
Nāya.	- Nāyakumārecariu
O.S.	- Ocean of Story

P.K.	- Prabandhakosa
P.R.	- Prthvirāja Rāso
P.V.	- Prthvirāja Vijaya
P.C.	- Prabandhacintāmaṇi
Priya.	- Priyadarsika
Q.J.N.S.	- Quarterly Journal of Mythic Society
Ratna	- Ratnāvalī
Rāj.	- Rājatarāṅgini
S.M.N.	- Śṛṅgāraṁjari-kathā
S.P.	- <sup>Śārngadhara</sup> <del>Śaṅgadhara</del> Padghatī
Sachau	- Alberuni's India, ed. Sachau
S.I.I.	- South Indian Inscriptions
Sukra	- Sukranīti
S.M.V.	- Sūktimuktāvalī
S.C.S.	- Smṛticandrikā, Saṁskārekāṇḍa
S.C.V.	- Smṛticandrikā, Vyavahāra Kāṇḍa
Samarāicca	- Samarāiccakahā
Takakusu	- A Record of Buddhist Religion as practised in India and Malaya Archipelag by Itsing
T.S.P.	- Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacarita
T.V.	- Tāpasa Vatsarāja
T.S.	- Taittiriya Saṁhitā
Ukti	- Uktivyakti-prakaraṇa
U.R.	- Uttararāmacaritam
✓ V.	- Verse
V.S.	- Venīśaṁbhara
V.R.	- Viśaladeva Rāso
Viddha	- Viddhaśālabhaṅjika
Vij.	- Viṅṇāṇesvara
Viśva	- Viśvarūpa
Vol.	- Volume
Yaj.	- Yājñavalkya Smṛti

## Chapter I

### Early Life And Education

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### Early Life And Education

The position of women in any country at any time is an index to the level of culture. We can have an idea of it from the attitude of the contemporary lawgivers towards them, the popular notions about them, and the prevalent social practices, as revealed through the literary and epigraphic sources.

We can begin our study with their early life and education. In ancient times, as to some extent later too, the birth of a girl was not so welcome as that of a son. Every parent wanted to have a son partly because of the religious notions and partly because he was the source of permanent income to the family. He lived with the parents and did not go to another family after his marriage. He could also help and protect the family at the time of any calamity or misfortune. He could offer oblations to the forefathers also.<sup>1</sup> The son could perpetuate the name of the family. It was believed that only the mother of a son deserved to be called a wife in the true sense of the term.<sup>2</sup> The general feeling that hovered in the minds of the people, was that in this world nothing could be compared with a son.<sup>3</sup> We notice that a special *sanskāra* (*Pūnāvāna*) was performed in order to ensure the birth of a son,<sup>4</sup> whereas there was no such rite for that of a girl.

A work of the tenth century entitled *Jñānapāñcamī Kathā* tells us about the general attitude of the people towards the daughter. It says that with the birth of a girl, the father was gripped with an unceasing

1. A.S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, Ch. I, p. 3.

2. *Ukti*, 7, p. 10.

3. A.K. Forbes, *Russala*, Ch. VIII, p.

4. R.B. Pandey, *Hindu Sanskāras (Hindi)*, Ch. 4, p. 73.



chain of worries<sup>1</sup>, so it was prayed that a daughter should never be born because she herself suffered much and caused miseries to others<sup>2</sup>. It also says that to have many daughters, was like living in hell<sup>3</sup>. The highest praise that could be showered on the daughter was to say that she was like a son<sup>4</sup>. Perhaps these were the reasons that led Somadeva to remark that the son and the daughter are at poles asunder — the son is the symbol of bliss and happiness and the daughter is the source of misery<sup>5</sup>.

The Prabodhachandrodaya (c. 1100 A.D.) expresses an extreme view that women were wicked, jealous, feeble and untrustworthy<sup>6</sup>. This kind of attitude may also have had serious repercussions upon the girls as well as their parents.

But, in spite of all this, the barbarous custom of female infanticide did not find its way in the society as no specific references to it are found in the literary works of the period. The prevalent view that the daughter was not as welcomed as the son, was not endorsed by all the people. Some social thinkers were of the opinion that the patricides occur<sup>real</sup> by the sons only and no one can point out a single example of a daughter killing her father<sup>7</sup>. It is interesting to point out that, although the contemporary literature contains some passages condemning the daughter, yet the statements lauding her are not altogether

1. Jñāna, I, vs. 88-90.

2. Ibid

3. Ibid, IV, v. 72.

4. Ibid, III, v. 88.

5. शोकः क्व कथा हि क्वानन्दः कथावान्भुतः ।

K.S.S., 23, 6.

6. Prabodhachandrodaya, Act I, pp. 24, 30, 43.

7. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation  
Ch. I, p. 6.

wanting. It is said in the Matsya Purāṇa that a virtuous daughter is equal to ten sons<sup>1</sup>. Somadeva, the illustrious author of the Kathāsaritsāgara, champions the cause of the daughter in forceful words by remarking that she provides happiness in this world and in the next too. ~~By giving her in marriage, the father gets the merit of 'Prithvidāna'~~. What is the benefit of having sons, who, in the hope of getting the kingdom, kill their own fathers<sup>2</sup>? It is evident from the Sanskrit dramas that the girls also received much affection from their parents as the sons. Thus it may be said that the importance of daughter was recognised in society by thoughtful people, and actually her position was not so worse and pitiable, as it is generally thought to have been.

### Samskāras for Girls

Now we have to see what Samskāras were performed for the girls. Manu and Yājñavalkya, the two great lawgivers, were of the opinion that the sacraments were as necessary for the girls as for the boys. But there was a difference between the way of performing these rites in the case of the girls. According to these lawgivers, the Samskāras for the girls should be performed

1. दशमुक्त्रमाकन्या या न स्याच्छीलवर्जिता ।

Matsya Purāṇa, 154/157.

2. राजन्तिकं कन्यारत्नकन्या परितप्यते ।

पुत्रपुत्रीऽप्युत्माः कन्याः शिवादिह परत्र च ॥

राज्यदुष्टेषु का तेषु पुत्रपुत्रास्वा महीपुत्राः ।

ये मदायन्ति कर्क का मर्कटा इव ॥

फलं यच्च बुतादानात्कुतः पुत्रात्परतः ।

K.S.S. 28, 47-50.

at proper time and in the prescribed order, but without the recitation of the sacred mantras<sup>1</sup>. Their marriage, however, might be performed with the recitation of the mantras<sup>2</sup>.

Mamū gives specific rules for the Namakarana Samskāra of the girls. He recommends that the names of the girls should be simple, easily pronounceable, sweet, of clear meaning, indicative of good meaning and should end in 'ā', 'ī' etc.<sup>3</sup> Pāraskara<sup>4</sup> and Sāmkha<sup>5</sup> also accept the view of Mamū in this regard.

Medhātithi, a well-known commentator of Mamū, who flourished in the ninth century A.D., opines that this rule was prescribed because the girls were not well-educated and could neither pronounce nor understand the meaning of difficult words. He says: "The names of women should be such as can be uttered with ease even by women and children. It is mostly they that have got to deal with women and their organ of speech being not very efficient, can not pronounce each and every samskrit word. Hence the texts lay stress upon pronounceability in the case of feminine names<sup>6</sup>."

Mamū seems to have prescribed this rule to lay stress on the goodness and simplicity of the girls, but Medhātithi interpreted it in a way which reflects the growing lack of literary education among women.

1. Mamū, II, 66, Yaj. I, 13.

2. विवाहस्तु समन्वयः

Yaj., I, 13.

3. Mamū, II, 33.

4. व्युत्पादनाकारान्तं स्त्रीयं तद्वत्

S.C.S., p. 55.

5. ईकारान्तं स्त्रीयामिव कृते नाम्नि वृत्तिं तत्कुलं भवति

Ibid, p. 55.

6. On Mamū, II, 33.

long. While commenting on a verse of Manu, Medhātithi clarifies the position by saying: "As marriage has been prescribed for girls in the place of the initiation, the necessity of the latter is precluded, ~~stands~~ its purpose being served by the marriage itself. When the woman serves her husband, she does what is meant to be accomplished by residence with the teacher, and the household duties she performs serve the purpose of the worship of fire<sup>1</sup>." Kullūka also gives the same explanation<sup>2</sup>.

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Medhātithi further says that when marriage was the same as the initiation ceremony, it follows that after the initiation men were bound to follow the ordinances of Śrutis and Smṛtis. Like men, women were also comparatively free in their action before marriage, but after its performance they had to follow the rules of Śrutis and Smṛtis<sup>3</sup>. It appears that Manu did not lay down a general rule. He only seems to hold that any particular girl, who on account of any unavoidable condition could not be initiated before marriage, was eligible for the marriage ritual. But later in the time of Medhātithi, the circumstances had considerably changed and nobody could think of the initiation of girls as it had gone out of practice. It was generally felt that marriage is the most important ritual in the life of a woman.

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1. वेदग्रहणार्थं वैदिकः संस्कार उपनयनात्यो यः स स्त्रीणां वैवाहिकी विधिः  
 ---- जतो विवाहस्योपनयनस्थाने विहितत्वाजस्य निवृत्तिरिति विवाहस्तत्कार्यकरः ।  
 हन्त प्राप्तं वेदाध्ययनं प्राप्ता च व्रतकर्ता । उपनयनं नाम मा मुमुक्षुवदुपनयिणि  
 निवर्तयति । पतिस्त्विवा गुरोवासः । पतिं यत्सेवत उपवरत्यासाध्यति स एवास्या  
 गुरोवासः । गुरो वसत्याऽध्ययनं कर्तव्यं न चास्या गुरोवासीऽस्त्यतः कुतोऽध्ययनम् ।  
 गृहार्थं गृहकृत्यानि रन्धनपारिणत प्रत्यवेदाणादीनि यानि नक्ते वक्ष्यन्ते ----  
 अग्निहोत्रा च यावन्धननियन्तृमुहो व्रतपारिणः स सर्वं उपलभ्यते ।

Medh. on Manu, II, 67.

2. तस्माद् विवाहादेः उपनयनस्थाने विधानादुपनयनादेः निवृत्तिः ।

Kullūka on Manu, II, 67.

3. Medh. on Manu, II, 67.

But in the age of the early Dharmasūtras the Upanayana was performed for girls also, though its performance was not necessary. According to Hārīta, there were two kinds of women - 'Brahmavādinis' (those who were initiated and were fit for the Vedic studies and begging alms) and 'Sadyovadhūs' (those who were not initiated and instead married at an early age).<sup>1</sup> Yama (8th cen.) refers to the regular upanayana of women in the past. However, though he allowed the performance of Upanayana for girls, he laid down that they could not wear 'Mekhala' and 'Ajina' (a cloth made of skin) and could not beg alms outside their homes.<sup>2</sup>

The evidence of the works of Bāṇa indicates that at least in the seventh century some women had the opportunity of being initiated. He mentions that Sarasvatī and Mahāśvetā were wearing the sacred thread.<sup>3</sup> The Matsya Purāṇa states that Sāmnatī, Śatarūpa and Uśā were Brahmavādinis.<sup>4</sup> It is known from the Brhatkathā-mañjarī of Kāśmīra that some women used to perform 'Sandhyā'

1. द्विविधास्तत्रैव ब्रह्मविद्यामप्युपनयनम् । तत्र ब्रह्मविद्यानामुपनयनमन्वेत्यनं  
वेदस्यैव स्वगृहे च स्नातव्येति । सद्योवधूनां द्यौर्दिवसे विवाहो उदीयदुपनयनमन्वेत्यनं  
कृत्वा विवाहः कर्तव्यः ।

Hārīta quoted in S.C.S., p. 62.

2. पुराण्ये तु नारीणां योगे ध्वनमिष्यते ।  
अप्यापनं च वेदनां प्राविशेवधनतया ॥  
स्वगृहे देव कर्माणां वेदार्थं विद्येयते ।  
वस्येद् अग्निमन्त्रस्य जटाधारणस्य एव च ॥

Yama quoted in S.C.S., p. 62.

3. ब्रह्मविद्यामप्युपनयनम्

H.C., Ch. I, p. 14; Kāśmīrī, p. 248.

4. Matsya Purāṇa, 20/27, 4/24, 150/290.

rites<sup>1</sup>. They could not be eligible for such rites without having gone through the initiation.

The idea of initiation of the women, however, lingered on in this period and some women might have been initiated but actually the importance of this sacrament for women had considerably been reduced and it <sup>had almost gone</sup> ~~was becoming~~ out of vogue.

### Games And Pastimes

A careful study of the various sources suggest that girls used to play various games for entertainment in their free time. We find that girls, both of royal and ordinary families, took interest in playing games. There was no age limit for playing these games, some of them were played both in the childhood and afterwards and some were played only in the childhood. Little girls used to play various games together with their friends. We have the instances of Kādambarī, Mahāśveta<sup>2</sup> and Kāmalata<sup>3</sup>, who in their childhood played many games with their friends. The *Deśināmamālā* (12th cen.) of Hemacandra reveals that the game of 'hide and seek' was popular among the little boys and girls<sup>4</sup>. But it seems that the game of ball was more popular among the princesses. Raviṣeṇa, in his *Padma Purāṇa* describes how princess *Āṇjanāsundarī* was moving about while playing ball<sup>5</sup>.

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1. *Brhatkathamanjari*, v. 81, p. 13.

2. *Kādambarī*, Tr. Kāle, p. 231.

3. P.C. Tr. Tawney, p. 27.

4. D.H., I, v. 53; III, v. 30.

5. *Padma Purāṇa*, Part I, Parva 15, v. 21.



In the *Dasakumāracarita* princess *Kandukavati* is shown as playing ball. The book gives a vivid description of her actions in ball playing<sup>1</sup>. It also mentions another princess *Kāntimatī* who was playing ball<sup>2</sup>. That girls used to play ball is also evident from the *Kuttanimatam*. We find there that *Lalitā* was being told by her mother not to play ball any more<sup>3</sup>. *Mrgāṅkavati*, the heroine of a play of *Rajasekhara*, shows her cleverness in playing ball. The author has devoted four verses <sup>to</sup> describing her action as a ball player<sup>4</sup>. A play ascribed to *Parimala* or *Padmagupta* depicts *Sasiprabhā* as playing with a ball<sup>5</sup>. *Sriharsa's* *Naisadhiyacaritam* also reveals that girls used to play ball<sup>6</sup>. —

— Some of the scenes carved on the temples of *Khajurāho*, suggest that the ball-game was a favourite pastime of ladies. In one of the temples a woman is depicted as holding a ball in her right hand, the pose suggests that she is going to throw it<sup>7</sup>.

1. D.C., Uch. VI, pp. 122-4.

2. सतीभिः कन्दुकानुक्रोधानां काशीभुवनेन्द्रसिंहस्य कन्यां कान्तिमतीं च ।

Ibid, later part, Uch. IV, p. 302.

3. Kutta, v.361.

4. Viddha, Act II, vs. 6-9, pp. 45-6.

5. N.C., Canto V, v. 23, p. 76, I.A. Vol. XXXVI, p. 155.

6. Naisadha, Canto VI, vs. 29, 42, pp. 165, 168.

7. Back of the small temple on the right front of *Lakshman* temple  
*Urmila Agarwal, Khajurāho Sculptures and Their Significance,*  
 Ch. IX, p. 166.

Kendaria, Lakṣmaṇa and Jagadambī temples also contain some such scenes<sup>1</sup>. Karkaraka - a game of throwing pebbles in the air was played by the girls all over India. Even today it is popular among the little girls and the boys. While describing the subject of Kubera, Hemacandra in his *Trisastīśalākāpurāṇasācarita* says; "Girls play the Karkaraka at will with the pearl-settings of the Svastika in the court-yard"<sup>2</sup>.

*Hemacandra* He mentions another game - ambettī - and calls it 'mustidyūtam'<sup>3</sup>. It was a kind of game of 'odd and even' in which both boys and the girls took interest. One girl used to hide a few cowries or fruit-seeds in her hands and asked the other to tell whether it was odd or even. If the answer was correct, the girl who asked the question, lost the same to the other and if the case was the opposite she claimed the same number of seeds or cowries from her.

Princesses, queens and courtesans in particular and sometimes the ordinary women too, used to indulge in gambling. The reason for it may be that they had enough money to stake in it, while the ordinary and poor women could not do so for want of money.

According to <sup>the</sup> *Padmapurāṇa* (c. 678 A.D.) the queen of king Śrīvardhana, won the ring of the priest in gambling<sup>4</sup>. Another *Jainapurāṇa* also says that queen Ramadatta, the wife of king Simhasena, won the ring and the sacred thread of the minister in gambling<sup>5</sup>.

1. Ibid., p. 166.

2. T.S.P., Vol. I, Book I, p. 150.

3. D.N., Book I, v. 7, p. 5.

4. *Padmapurāṇa*, Parva 5, v. 80.

5. *Uttarapurāṇa*. Parva 59. v. 167.



There is a verse in Kuttanīmatam which suggests that women liked gambling<sup>1</sup>. The Karakandacariu, an Apabhraṃśa work of the eleventh century, states that Ratnalekhā was unbeatable in the game of dice<sup>2</sup>. A reference that occurs in the Naisadhiyacarita, suggests that women of royal families used to play chess or some other game of the same kind<sup>3</sup>.

Besides playing these games, girls used to pass their free time in many ways. In the inner apartments of the princesses there was every arrangement for their recreation. Kādambarī had in her apartment all the materials for the enjoyment - there <sup>were</sup> arrangements for ball-playing and swinging, instruments of the music, pond full of scented water, carved sculpture, looking glass, 'Kadalīgrha', 'Sangitāsālā' etc. There were many birds and animals also for her enjoyment<sup>4</sup>.

One of the inscriptions of the Pāla king Dharmapāla, suggests that the parrot was liked by the women<sup>5</sup>.

It is known from Kuttanīmatam that Suratadevī had a parrot<sup>6</sup>, Kāmasenā had a mongoose<sup>7</sup>, and Mukulā had a ram<sup>8</sup> as their

1. Kutta, v. 894.

2. K.C., Ch. VIII, v. 14.

3. Naisadha, canto VI, v.

4. V.S. Agarwal, Kādambarī - Ek Sāṃskṛtika Adhyayana, p. 368;  
Kādambarī, Tr. Kāle, p. 175.

5. सौधे शोभसितं स्थितं सरहणं हीलाशुकी व्याहृती

Khalīmpur Prasasti of Dharmapāla, E.I., Vol. I, p. 209.

हीलादेवनि पञ्चरीदर शुभेयदीप्तात्मस्तम्भ

E.I., Vol. IV, p. 248.

6. Kutta, v. 355.

7. Ibid, v. 359.

8. Ibid, v. 360.

pet animals.

The Khajurāho sculptures also reveal to us that women were fond of tame birds and animals. Women are depicted as holding parrot, sārīkā, <sup>and</sup> little birds, and sometimes monkeys also accompany them<sup>1</sup>.

Women were interested in stories ~~also~~. Bāna tells us that queen Vilāsavati was hearing attentively the stories of history and the Purāṇas which were being told by the old ascetic women<sup>2</sup>. The daughter of Nārada was reading <sup>the</sup> Mahābhārata in a sweet voice and Kādambarī was <sup>listening to</sup> ~~hearing~~ it with rapt attention<sup>3</sup>.

In the Karpūramāñjarī, we find a reference to a pleasure-house (līlāgrha). The author gives its graphic description and the reader can not, but <sup>have a vivid picture of</sup> ~~feel enjoying with~~ the girls who are mentioned as chatting freely and affectionately in it. He says that the air was scented with the fragrance of the 'agarabattis', the earthen lamps made the whole house glitter, the pearl buntings were hung on its ceiling, the pigeons were flying over it and there were beds also for the comfort of the girls<sup>4</sup>.

To sing folk-songs on the auspicious occasions was also one of the sources of entertainment. On the occasion of the wedding of Rājyasrī, women sang songs naming the bride and the bridegroom<sup>5</sup>.

1. Inner Pradaksina, Viśvanātha temple; Right outside Viśvanātha temple; Inside Jagdambī temple; Left outside Kāndariyā temple.

U. Agarwal, Khajurāho Sculptures <sup>a</sup> And Their Significance, pp. 165-6

2. Kādambarī, Tr. Kāle, p. 131.

3. Ibid., p. 314.

4. Karp., act III, v. 27.

5. H.C., Tr. Cowell and Thomas, Ch. IV, p. 124.

In the Viddhaśālabhañjika we notice that on the occasion of the wedding of the king the clown asked the maids to sing and said that he would also join them<sup>1</sup>.

Women also used to sing folk-songs while at work ~~merely~~ <sup>mainly</sup> to lessen the tiredness, ~~and to enjoy time~~. A work of the eighth century A.D. tells us that the peasant women while protecting their fields from the wild animals, used to sing songs<sup>2</sup>. The Jain Mahāpurāṇa also refers to women who protected their fields and at the same time sang songs<sup>3</sup>.

Hemacandra says that women used to sing songs while at work and thus could not feel tired<sup>4</sup>. We also find a reference to it in another Jaina book. It is stated therein that the Gurjara women love <sup>d</sup> 'Bhairava Rāga' and used to sing songs collectively<sup>5</sup>. From these references it <sup>becomes clear</sup> ~~may be said~~ that <sup>songs were</sup> ~~it was~~ the favourite means of recreation for the village women.

Another interesting <sup>amusement</sup> ~~thing~~ by which women used to pass their free time was the cock-fight. Guṇabhadraśāhārya describes

1. Viddha, Act IV, p. 116.

2. कितकस्यजित्समपटुय-

-त्कलमगीपमधूर्नं मृगवृक्षम् ।

श्रुततदीरितिकीमलीतक-

ध्वनिमिणीऽनिमिणी दण्डमग्रतः ॥

Śisupālavadha, canto VI, v. 49.

व्यासिद्धमस्मानवधानतः पुरा  
मृतस्यैवावित्युक्तमयिन्मयी ।  
गीतानि गोप्याः कलनं मृगवृक्षी  
न नूनमपीति हरिर्विलोक्यतु ॥

Ibid., canto XII, v. 43.

3. हरिणीतस्काकुष्टे वेष्टिता हंसगण्डे । शालिनीप्यो दुशीरस्यमुदं तसुर्वष्टिका ॥

Mahāpurāṇa Part II, 26th Parva, v. 117.

4. D.K., canto III, v. 5.

5. Kumāra, canto V. vs. 69. 91.

vividly the scene when king Ghanaratha of Pundarikinī city was watching curiously the fight between the cocks of his second queen's maid servant and that of his daughter-in-law's attendant<sup>1</sup>.

A similar description is also given by Hemacandra<sup>2</sup>.

Women had a fancy for swinging ~~and water-sports~~, to which we find <sup>many</sup> innumerable references in the literature of our period. Swinging appears to have been the pleasure of every woman ~~whoever she might have been.~~

In the Kādambarī of Bāṇa we find an elaborate description of the inner apartment of princess Kādambarī. It is said that there was a swing in it which was decorated with flowers and little bells on both sides. The bells used to ring as the swing <sup>went</sup> came up and down<sup>3</sup>. In the Kuttanīmatam also, there is a reference to a woman enjoying a swing<sup>4</sup>. A reference also occurs in the Mahāpurāṇa <sup>mentions</sup> that girls enjoyed the spring season by singing and swinging<sup>5</sup>.

Rajasekhara in his Karpūramanjari, mentions a swing-festival - 'Hindolā-chaturthī'<sup>6</sup>. We have a graphic description

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1. तदात्र त्रियमित्रायाः पुष्पेणा नाम वैटिका । कुक्काकुं समानीय क्षतुण्डामिदामक्ष् ।  
पक्षयित्वा सह यमनं जय्युः कुक्काकुलाः । परिणां प्रददितव्यी दीनाराणां सहस्रक्षम् ।  
इति देव्या कनीयस्याः भुत्वा तद्वणिक्काः सनयत् । कांका वज्रकुण्डालं कुट्टं योजयत्

Uttarapurāṇa, Parva 63, vs. 150-52.

2. T.S.P., Book III, p. 279.

3. V.S. Agarwal - Kādambarī - Ek Sāṅskṛtika Adhyayana, p.376.

4. Kutta, v. 669.

5. श्रीहनुमत्कान्तामिर्वाच्यमानाः स्त्रीतिथिः । जाम्बोलाः स्तम्भमुपेतः समाजोत्थमि  
स्वयः ॥

Mahāpurāṇa, Parva 43, v. 223.

6. Karp., Act II, p. 253.

of Karpūramañjarī's swing-enjoyment<sup>1</sup>. A vivid description of the swing-festival is found in the Kumārapālacarita of Hemacandra<sup>2</sup>. The Deśināmāla and <sup>the</sup> Trisastīśalākāpuruṣacarita enable us to know that a game called 'Navalaya' was played by the married women while swinging<sup>3</sup>.

Women also used to pass their free time in water-sport which seems to be a favourite pastime. The Padmapurāṇa says that women took pleasure in water sport<sup>4</sup>, and gives a description of the water-sport of Rāma and Sītā<sup>5</sup>.

The reference to the water-sport of women is also found in the Kuttānimatam. It says that women used to play water with syringes on the occasion of Charcharī<sup>6</sup>. Māgha describes in sixty-two verses the actions of women who were enjoying water-sport<sup>7</sup>. Many references to the water-sports of the kings and the queens and other inmates of the inner apartments are found in the literature of our period<sup>8</sup>.

That the women were interested in the water-sport, is clear from the lively description of the same given by Hemacandra

1. Ibid., Act II, vs. 30-32, p. 253-5.

2. K.C., canto III, vs. 19-25.

3. D.N., Book IV, v.21, T.S.P., Book I, p.158, Book III, p.262.

4. Padmapurāṇa, Parva 8, vs. 95-99.

5. Ibid., parva 42, vs. 76-84.

6. Kuttā, vs. 684-87.

7. Śisupālavadhā, canto VIII, vs. 1-62.

8. Uttarapurāṇa, parva 63, v.81, parva 68, v.144, parva 71, v.130, Yaśastilakacampū, Ch.III, pp. 355-6, K.P., Śalibhadrakathānakam, p.59, V.D.C., canto VII, v.71, canto X, vs. 81-91, canto XII, vs. 65, 67.

in the Kumārāpālacarita.<sup>1</sup> In connection with the description of Vijayapura, the capital of king Lakṣmanasena of Bengal, in the Pavanadūtāṃ we find references to women who are depicted as taking pleasure in water-sport.<sup>2</sup>

From the above account one may easily infer that women of our period were fond of various amusements and games. Some of them were popular among young girls and married ladies, some were mainly popular among little girls, and some were mainly for the ladies of the ruling aristocracy.

### Education

As the marriage was generally performed at the tender age of eight to twelve years,<sup>3</sup> no higher education could be imparted to girls before marriage and after marriage they were engaged in looking after their hearths and homes, and as such they could not get time for receiving education. In such circumstances we can not expect girls to be highly educated. It has been surmised that women even did not have the knowledge of alphabets in the eighth century A.D.<sup>4</sup> This of course shows a general decline in female education. However, in royal, aristocratic and well-to-do families, the tradition of female education continued to some extent throughout the early medieval period. We find many references to it in the literature of that age. As the literature reflects to some extent, the social condition of the age in which it is written, these can not be discarded.

1. K.C., canto IV, vs. 41-77.

2. Pavanadūtāṃ, vs. 33, 35, 38, 42.

3. Infra, Ch. II, pp. 68-70

4. A.S. Altekar, Prāchīna Bhārtīya Śikṣaṇa Paddhati, Ch. VII, p. 137.



### Education In Schools

The first question that arises in connection with the female education, is whether the girls used to go to the Pāthasālas or schools for receiving education and whether they used to read along with the boys. The literature of our time tells us that some ladies of the royal and aristocratic families used to go to schools. We find reference to lady-teachers also and as such the parents did not hesitate in sending their daughters to schools. It appears that Kāmandakī in the Mālatīmādhavam is the teacher of a school where she imparts education to the girls. She tells Avalokitā that Saudāminī is her pupil<sup>1</sup>. Saudāminī also confirms what Kāmandakī says earlier<sup>2</sup>. It indicates that at least in the eighth century A.D. there ~~may~~ <sup>were</sup> have been some lady-teachers.

It is said that the mother of king Govindacandra of Bengal (a ruler of the eleventh century) received education in some school as she herself says, "when one day I returned from the Pāthasāla (school)....."<sup>3</sup>.

### Co-education

Some girls used to go to the teacher's home and were taught along with the boys. <sup>The</sup> Padmapurāṇa tells us that princess Chittotsavā received education in the home of her teacher where

1. वनेन मत्प्रियोभिर्योगेन स्नायसि मम पूर्व शिष्यां सौदामिनीम् ।

M.M., Act I, p. 30

2. स एषा विरतनीऽन्तेवासीकः प्रणमति ।

Ibid, Act X, p. 464.

3. T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 188.

Pingala, the son of the priest was also studying<sup>1</sup>. The Uttararāmacarita of Bhavabhūti (8th cen. A.D.) informs us that Ātreya received education in sage Vālmiki's āsrama with Lava and Kuśa<sup>2</sup>. His another play states that Kāmandakī had received education in the āsrama of a guru along with Bhūriवासु and Devarāta<sup>3</sup>.

But these pieces of evidence may or may not reflect the contemporary conditions. However, a picture of the society as painted in the folk-literature and other writings of the poets of Bengal gives us some idea about the system of education in that <sup>region</sup> country. The story of Puṣpaṁālā tells us that a princess and a Kotwal's son were reading in the same school<sup>4</sup>.

These references suggest that some women used to receive higher education along with the boys ~~which was imparted~~ <sup>generally mostly</sup> in the teacher's home. But their number was, however, not large and how many women got this opportunity is a matter of conjecture.

#### Subjects of Education

Although no specific course was prescribed for women yet a close scrutiny of the literature reveals to us that they used to learn various subjects.

1. तयोश्चितीत्सवापत्यं कथा गुरुगृहे च सा । राज्ञः सितमृत्लेखनी कणापुरिका ॥  
राजः पुरोहितस्यास्य कुम्भितस्य पिङ्गाः । स्वाहाकुण्डिमवी धीरे सुतस्तत्रैव पाठके ।

Padmapurāṇa, parva 26, vs. 5-6.

2. न त्वेताभ्यामतिदीप्तिप्रज्ञाभ्यामस्मदादेः सहाध्यनयोर्गोऽस्ति ।

U.R., Act II, p. 87.

3. किं न वेत्ति यदेकत्र नो विद्यापश्चिदाय नानादिगन्तवाससाहर्षमासीत् ।

M.M., Act I, p. 22.

4. T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 187. *this may, however, refer to later conditions.*



Some of the literary sources<sup>1</sup> of our period inform us that the queens, princesses and some ordinary women too, could read, write and speak Sanskrit and Prakrit, the knowledge of which must have been given to them.)

Some women also had an opportunity of learning religion and philosophy. We also find references to women who knew Tantric rites. It indicates that the knowledge of Tantra was also given to them<sup>2</sup>.

Some women also learnt Astrology<sup>3</sup> and some had specialised in Medical Sciences<sup>4</sup>.

The Kāvyaśiṃṣā of Rājasekhara throws some light on the study of the Śāstras<sup>5</sup>. Ksemendra tells us that Upakośa had a knowledge of Śāstras and was called 'Śrutajña'<sup>6</sup>. In the Prabandhakosa we find a reference to a widow who knew all the Śāstras<sup>7</sup>.

Girls were not devoid of the knowledge of Arithmetic. In the twelfth century, Bhāskarācārya wrote a book "Līlāvati" to teach this subject to his daughter. Certainly other girls <sup>of the upper class</sup> must have had the knowledge of arithmetic.

Importance was also given to the knowledge of fine arts such as music - vocal and instrumental, dance, painting,

1. Infra, pp. 24-24 25-8.

2. Infra, pp. 24-32 34-6

3. Infra, pp. 33

4. Infra, pp. 33

5. Kāvyaśiṃṣā, Ch. X.

6. Brhatkathamāñjarī, v. 76, p. 13.

7. <sup>Prabandhakosa</sup> Abhadraprabandha, p. 100.

needle work, weaving, acting etc.<sup>1</sup> In Kāśmīra the main subjects of female education were the Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana, Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata, the books of Viśākhilā on painting and of Dantilā on music, Ayurveda, cooking, sewing etc.<sup>2</sup>

Administrative and military training were also imparted to the princesses. Some common women <sup>associated with the court</sup> also knew the use of weapons like swords<sup>3</sup>. Some princesses also received training in swimming and riding<sup>4</sup>.

### Knowledge of Writing and Language and Literature

We find such references to women who had the knowledge of alphabets and could write them. While going through the history of Bengal we see how a girl named 'Viśayā' accomplished her desire of marrying a man of her choice (by adding a letter 'yā' to the word 'Viśa'). She cleverly wrote 'yā' after the original word 'Viśa' to make it her own name and thus succeeded in her object<sup>5</sup>. It shows that she knew what letters were used in her name and how to write them.

There is also a story about a merchant and his two wives. The younger one was well-educated and could recognise and tell the difference between the writing of two persons<sup>6</sup>. It also refers to a woman Līlavatī who was expert in writing. The literature of our period describes many women as writing a letter<sup>7</sup>.

1. Infra, p. 45

2. Ray, Early History And Culture of Kashmir, p. 97;

S.C. Banerji, Cultural Heritage of Kashmir, p. 16.

3. Infra, pp. 46-47

4. A.S. Altekar, Prāchīna Bharatiya Śikṣaṇa Paddhati, Ch. IX, p. 167.

5. T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 189.

6. Ibid, p. 190.

or verses or sometimes reciting Sanskrit verses. Some women also showed their creative ability and intelligence in solving problems and in discussions. Bana says that the ladies sent for the amusement of Prince Chandrapida could recite verses.<sup>1</sup> Avantisundari wrote a letter and gave it to Balachandrika to be given to Rajavahana.<sup>2</sup>

Rajasekhara mentions a Talapatra on which Mrgankavali wrote a verse of four lines in Sanskrit which shows her knowledge of that language.<sup>3</sup> She also uttered a verse in Sanskrit.<sup>4</sup> Her friend also composed two verses in Sanskrit.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, Vichaksana told Sulaksana the plight of the king Vidyadharamalla and Mrgankavali in Sanskrit.<sup>6</sup> Vichaksana and Sulaksana, the two sisters, had also poetic ability. Vichaksana recited a verse made by herself before the king.<sup>7</sup> Being gladdened by her ability the king remarked that she was a 'crest-jewel of poets'. Karpuramanjari, the heroine of the play of the same name, had also written a couplet on the leaf of a Ketaka flower.<sup>8</sup> The elder sister of Vichaksana also wrote a verse describing the plight of Karpuramanjari,<sup>9</sup> which was praised by the king.

1. Kadambari, Tr. Kale, p. 251.

2. सा स्वयमेव पत्रिकामालिख्य "वल्लभायैनामर्पय" इति मां नियुक्तवती

D.C., EARLIER Part Uch. V, p. 98.

3. Viddha, R.K. Tripathi, Hindi Tr., Act II, p. 49, Act III, p. 85.

4. Ibid, Act III, v. 23.

5. Ibid, Act II, vs. 20-21.

6. Ibid, Act III, vs. 1-2

7. Karp. Stenkonow, Act I, p. 231, Act II, p. 248.

8. Ibid, Act II, p. 247.

9. Ibid, Act II, p. 248.

The jester gives the name of 'Mahitalasarasvatī' to Vichakṣaṇā and 'Tribhuvanasarasvatī' to Sulakṣaṇā<sup>1</sup>. Kurāṅgikā, the friend of Karpūramañjarī recited before the king verses which were made by Karpūramañjarī<sup>2</sup>. The Paramāra ruler Bhoja (c. 1010-50 A.D.) was a patron and lover of the learned persons. Some intelligent and learned women were among the persons honoured by him.<sup>3</sup> Bālapandita the daughter of poet Dhanapāla, had a remarkable memory and intelligence. It is said that King Bhoja burnt the manuscript of book entitled Tilakamañjarī in fury. This made the poet sad and disappointed. But his daughter consoled him as she remembered the first part of the book. She wrote exactly the same account and herself completed the second part.<sup>4</sup> The Kathāsaritsāgara mentions a woman who composed a verse.<sup>5</sup> In the Naisadhiyacaritam Damayanti is described as writing a letter<sup>6</sup> and describing the beauty of moon in beautiful words.<sup>7</sup> These references in story-books, dramas and semihistorical works cannot be taken at their face value. However, they cannot be said to have been completely divorced from the actual conditions of society.

Some of the scenes that occur in the temples of Khajurāho, also prove that upper class women were educated and could read

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1. Ibid, Act II, p. 248.

2. Ibid, Act II, p. 274.

3. B.P., Ed. J.L. Sastri, pp. 224, 293, 355, 422; P.C., pp. 40-1.

4. P.C., p. 60.

5. O.S., Vol. II, Ch. CXXIV, p. 72.

6. Naisadha, canto VI, v. 63.

7. Ibid, canto XIII, vs. 58-100.

and write. Sometimes we find them either reading a book or writing a letter.<sup>1</sup> The poses of women with book, paper or pencil and with smiling or grief-stricken faces, unfold the contents of the books or the letters.

Many anthologies of our time as well as of the later period, contain the verses of the poetesses who flourished in this period. The Kāvya-lāṅkāra-sūtravṛtti of Vāmana, a minister of king Jayapīḍa of Kāśmīra (about eighth century A.D.) quotes a verse of poetess Phalguhastinī.<sup>2</sup> Her fame must have been established in his time. In the Sūktimuktāvalī of Jalhana the Kārṇatī poetess Vijayāṅkā is said to be the incarnation of Sarasvatī.<sup>3</sup> She is identified with the poetess Vijjā, Vidyā, or Bijjaka whose verses are quoted in many works.<sup>4</sup> She has also been identified with Vijayabhaṭṭarika, the wife of Chalukyan king Chandraditya. She might have flourished in the middle of the eighth century.

1. Right outside Viśvanātha temple, left balcony, Ardhamandap, Viśvanātha temple, inside Pradeśīnā, Viśvanātha temple; right outside Kāṇḍariā temple; right outside Pārśvanātha temple; left outside Dulādeo temple; right outside Jagdambī temple; inside Pārśvanātha temple; left outside Kāṇḍariā temple, Ādinātha temple and Lakṣmaṇa temple, U. Agarwal, Khajurāho Sculptures And Their Significance, pp. 169-70.

2. K.V.S., Sūtra 38.

3. पद्मवती कर्णटी दिव्यनि व्यस्यते ;  
या वैष्णविरा वासः कर्णिकारिण्यस्तस्य ॥

4. S.M.V., v. 96; K.V.S., vs. 51, 500, 502.

In the tenth century Rājasekhara expressed the opinion that women could also be poets like men and he gave example of such women.<sup>1</sup> His own wife Avantisundari was a critic and a poetess. Her views have been quoted by her husband in the Kāvya-mīmāṃsā.<sup>2</sup> He praises the easy and fluent style of poetess Silabhāṭṭarika and places her side by side with Bāṇa.<sup>3</sup> The epithet 'bhāṭṭarika' suggests that she was a queen. It is further corroborated by her intimacy with king Bhoja, a Gurjara-Pratihara king of Kanauj. This king was ruling the city in the ninth century A.D. So she may have flourished in that period. She is one of the great poetesses to whom Dhanadadeva pays tribute.<sup>4</sup> One of her verses occurs in the Kāvya-prakāśa of Maṃmata.<sup>5</sup> Another poetess Subhadrā is also mentioned by Rājasekhara.<sup>6</sup> Poetess Vikatanitamba's writings are said to have given pleasure to every reader.<sup>7</sup> Two verses of this poetess are found in the Kavindravachana samucchaya.<sup>8</sup> The Sarasvatī-Kaṇṭhābharana quotes —

1. दुसुखवद् धीमतोऽपि क्वे भवियुः । संसारो दयात्मनि उन्मेषति, न स्वेन  
पोरुषं वा किञ्चनमप्येति । क्यन्ते हृदये च राजपुत्रयो, महायाम् दुहितरौ,  
गणिकाः, कोटुकिमाप्येव राजभद्रतकुदयः कथयन् ।

Kāvya-mīmāṃsā, Ch. X, p. 138.

2. Ch. V, pp. 52, Ch. IX, p. 122, Ch. XI, p. 148.

3. सन्दर्पोः स मे गुणः पश्चात्तिरोतिष्ठति ।  
तिलहारकवादि कर्त्तव्यतत्त्वम् वा योऽपि ॥  
S.M.V., v. 91.

4. तेना विख्यातास्तामोरकायाः कथं कर्तुं वीति विद्याः निरर्थोऽपि ।  
विद्यां वेत्तुं वादिनो निर्विद्येत्तुं विद्यां कर्तुं यः प्रयोजः स कथः ॥  
S.P., v. 163.

5. Kāvya-prakāśa, Jhalkikara, Ullāsa I, v. 1.

6. S.M.V., v. 95.

7. के वेदनिर्देशेन विद्यां गुणवतिताः । निर्वान्ति निर्वान्तिताः न शोभन्ति सुखैः ॥  
8. K.V.S. Ed. Thomas, vs. 296, 372. S.M.V., v. 92.



a verse of Cinnamā. It is evident from her name that she was a South Indian poetess. The Bhoja-Prabandha<sup>1</sup> and Prabandha Cintāmaṇi mention a poetess Sītā. She had learnt the three Vedas, the Raghuvamśa, the Kamasūtra and the writings of Chāṇakya<sup>2</sup>.

Another South Indian poetess of great repute was Kānti — a Kannada <sup>woman</sup> poetess. ~~She~~ graced the court of Hoysala king Ballāla I. She flourished in the eleventh century A.D. <sup>and</sup> Poet Nāgachandra was also in the same court. He was very proud and called himself 'Abhinava-Pampa'. Others also thought that he was a great poet. Kānti used to take part in contests with him. This fact is enough to show her poetic ability. A sixteenth century poet Bāhubalī was so much influenced by her that he gave her the title of 'Abhinava Vāgdevī'<sup>3</sup>.

We do not know anything about the poetess Prabhudevī of Lāṭa except that her poetry gave pleasure to its readers even after her demise<sup>4</sup>. Three verses of Bhāvakadevi are included in the Kavīndravachana samuchchaya<sup>5</sup>. She chose sweet and simple words

1. B.P., Ed. J.L. Sastri, v. 289, p. 392.

2. P.C., Ch. II, p. 63.

3. Q.J.M.S., Vol. XLV, No. 1, July 1954, p. 11.

4. सुकीर्त्या स्मरलीनां क्लानां च विलासः ।

प्रभुदेवी कवी लाटी गतापि हृदि तिष्ठति ॥

S.M.V., v. 94.

5. <sup>K.V.S.</sup> Ibid, vs. 177, 356, 359.

to express herself and avoided long, unfamiliar and compound words.<sup>1</sup> She was also called Bhāvadēvī or Bhāvākādēvī.<sup>2</sup> Mārulā is another poetess who is praised by Dhanadādeva.<sup>3</sup> Like Mārulā, Morikā is also mentioned by Dhanadādeva as a poetess of repute.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, we see that there were many poetesses in our time whose verses are preserved in the writings of the later authors. But unfortunately we know nothing of their lives.

#### Knowledge of Grammar

Some women acquired proficiency in grammar. Somadeva in his Kathasaritsāgara mentions a queen who had the knowledge of Sanskrit grammar.<sup>5</sup> The heroine of the Saṁdēśa Rāsakā shows marvellous intellect in composing dohā, catuṣpadī, gāthā, vastu, domilaka, mālīnī, adillā, phullaka, madillā, cudillaka, Khadabādaka, skandhaka, dvipadī, lankotaka, ramanīyā etc.<sup>6</sup> Queen Ratnamālā, the chief queen of king Haranārāyaṇa of Assam, was interested in the publication of grammar books. It was on her insistence that Vidyāvāgīśa wrote a work on grammar named 'Ratnamālā'.<sup>7</sup>

1. Sanskrit Poetess J.B. Chaudhuri, Part A, P.V.

2. Ibid, p. 4.

3. S.P., v. 163.

4. Ibid.

5. O.S., Vol. I, Ch. VI, p. 69.

6. Saṁdēśa Rāsaka, Abdul Rahman, vs. 74, 88, 91-2, 99, 104, 107, 110, 113, 118, 125, 136, 147, 181, 190, 202-3, 207, 212, 220.

7. N.N. Vasu, Social History of Kamarūpa, Vol. II, p. 63.



### Knowledge of Philosophy

Some women also acquired philosophic knowledge. Some of them had the knowledge of Bauddha philosophy, some knew Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā and some were well-up in the philosophy of Yoga.

Ēaṇa informs us that Divākaramitra was asked by king Harṣa to teach Bauddha philosophy to Rājyasrī.<sup>1</sup> Buddhism allowed women to become nuns who had to put on a special dress.<sup>2</sup> In the Mālatīmādhavaṃ Kāmandakī is said to be a Buddhist nun.<sup>3</sup> These nuns must have been well conversant with the principles of Buddhism. But it may be pointed out that in the early medieval period Buddhism was on the decline, and as such it could not do much for the education of women. The number of Buddhist nuns does not appear to have been large in this period.

It appears that some women had also an opportunity of learning the tenets of Jainism. The Jaina Purāṇas refer to various Jaina nuns.<sup>4</sup> It is said that Haribhadra Sūri was so much impressed by Yākinī Mahattarā, who was a great Jaina scholar, that he accepted her as his spiritual mother.<sup>5</sup> Guṇasādhvī was another Jaina scholar; Siddhārṣi Sūri calls her the goddess of learning.<sup>6</sup>

1. "I desire that she should remain at my side and be comforted with your righteous discourse, and your passionless instruction which produces salutary knowledge, and your advice which calms the disposition and your Buddhist doctrines which drive away worldly passions".

H.C., Tr. Cowell and Thomas, P. 258.

2. Takakusu, p. 78.

3. M.M., Act I, p. 17.

4. Infra, Ch. VII, pp.

5. P.K., p. 24; Winternitz, A History of Indian Literature, Vol. II, p. 480.

6. Unamiti. n. 776.

A popular event which is linked with the name of the great philosopher Śaṅkarāchārya, describes his śāstric discussion with Maṇḍanamisra. The wife of Maṇḍanamisra was acting as a judge in this discussion<sup>1</sup>. It seems that she must have had great knowledge of Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta and other systems of philosophy, otherwise she could not act as a judge between these two philosophers of repute.

In the Uttararāmacarita it is said that Ātreya had a mind to receive the knowledge of Vedānta philosophy from the sage Agastya<sup>2</sup>. It may not be inferred that the knowledge of philosophy was included in the curriculum but it may be said that it was a tradition which lingered on in the eighth century too. The same inference can also be drawn from a reference found in the Bengali literature. <sup>we find in it</sup> It ~~says~~ that in the discussion which took place between Prince Sundara and princess Vidya, many philosophical topics pertaining to the Vedānta, Vaiśeṣika and ~~yoga~~ philosophy were discussed. It could not be decided <sup>as to</sup> who ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> greater in knowledge as both <sup>the</sup> parties were equally well-up in philosophy<sup>3</sup>.

1. विद्याय मायां विदुषीं सदस्यां

विधीयतां वादक्या सुधीन्द्र ॥

इत्थं सरस्वत्यवतारताञ्जी

तद्धर्मपत्न्यास्तमपाणिताम् ॥

Śaṅkaradigvijaya, canto VIII, v. 51.

2. वस्मिन्मगस्त्यप्रमुखाः प्रदेहे मूयांस उद्गीथविदो वसन्ति ।

तम्याऽक्षिन्तुं निगमान्तविषां बालीक्षिपास्वादिह पर्यटामि ॥

U.R., Act II, v. 3.

3. T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 201.

Some women also acquired proficiency in Yoga. Kādambarī is stated to have acquired the knowledge of Yoga and she used to practice it.<sup>1</sup> A Jaina story-book of the tenth century states that Akusalamālā through her yogic power could enter the body of another person.<sup>2</sup> In the Prthvirājaviṇaya it is said that Rudrānī, the queen of Chahamanā king Chandanarāja (c. 890-917 A.D.) was called Atmaprabhā due to her proficiency in Yoga.<sup>3</sup>

#### Tantric Knowledge and Witchcraft

The Śakta-Tantric religion was becoming popular in our time. Buddhism and Purāṇic Hinduism were influenced by it to a great extent.<sup>4</sup> This religion believed in the supremacy of the female principle, and so the Tantrics were generous towards women and allowed them the right of initiation.<sup>5</sup> The highest honour of becoming 'gurus' was also given to them, and as such they could initiate others. But, of course, certain specific qualifications were required for this purpose.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Kādambarī, Tr. Kala, p. 176.

अकसलमालायां योग्यतया प्रविष्टा ।

2. केषुचि यामके अति योग्यतया विमति ते ॥

त प्रकानुपुष्टेतेऽस्मिन् निर्विकल्पकमयदा ।

मुक्त-मागमकेऽत्र यदा संपदेति तः ॥

Upaniti, Book III, p. 257.

3. P.V. canto VI, vs. 38-9

4. Thomas, Indian Women Through The Ages, Ch. X, p. 276.

5. Arthur Avalon, Principles of Tantra, Ch. XIV, pp. 542-3.

6. Ibid, p. 544.

We find that some women attained the knowledge of Tantra and Mantra and had acquired various siddhis. It is stated in the *Mālatīmādhavam* that Saudāminī and Kapālakundalā were proficient in Tantra - mantra.<sup>1</sup> Saudāminī had acquired the *Ākarsinī* siddhi.<sup>2</sup> It is worthwhile to note that the names of some women occur in the list of eighty-four Siddhas. Of these Manibhadra was a *grhadāsī*, Mekhalāpā and Kanakhalāpā were the daughters of householders (*grhapatikanya*), and Lakṣmīkāra was princess.<sup>3</sup>

Bengal and Assam have been the famous centres of Tantric cults. We find that not only men but some women also could perform miracles. Queen Maynāmatī had acquired 'mahājñāna' from guru Gorakṣanātha. It is said that she remained in the fire for seven days and came out unscathed.<sup>4</sup> She is said to have had full control even over the gods.<sup>5</sup> The *Rājatarāṅginī* also refers to a woman who practised Tantric rites.<sup>6</sup>

1. M.M., Act I, pp. 31, 32; Act V, vs. 2-4; Act IX, v. 53.

2. गुह्यसूक्तसंज्ञकयोगमिदं नाम ।

सुधासूक्तं विदुस्तन्मयो विदुः ॥

Ibid, Act IX, v. 53.

3. B.N. Sharma, *Social Life In Northern India*, Appendix VIII, p. 352.

4. T.C. Dasgupta, *Aspects of Bengali Society*, Ch. X, p. 154.

5. Ibid, pp. 155, 160.

6. *Raj.*, I, 333-5.

Jinesvara Sūri refers to a charikā who was well-versed in tantra - mantra and could perform any magical rite<sup>1</sup>. The Karakandacariu describes the procedure with which Rativegā worshipped the goddess. It suggests that she was well-up in the tãntric rites<sup>2</sup>.

Women knew witchcraft also. It is evident from the Kathā-saritsāgara that some women used to practice witchcraft and Kālarātri is mentioned as their teacher<sup>3</sup>. The same book mentions the names of Prabhavati and Pṛthvidēvi who were proficient in witchcraft<sup>4</sup>. Kalhana in his Rājataranginī, while narrating the events of the reign of queen Didda, tells us that, besides possessing other qualifications, she knew witchcraft. In order to regain the throne, she is said to have applied witchcraft and killed in this way her three grandsons<sup>5</sup>. In a story of the Prabandhacintāmani we find the mention of Demati, a queen of the country of Dāhala, who in order to give birth to a child who would be the paramount ruler of the world, delayed the delivery by employing witchcraft<sup>6</sup>.

1. हवी य जण एग वरिया मणिया

K.P., Jayadevakathānakan, p. 107.

2. उदयिउ मंहु तारं रमु णं वमु जिणं हसियहमु ।

तही मज्जि विवसिय दिव्वदेवि पोसाक णामं पिर करिय ॥

K.C., Ch. VII, v. 12.

3. O.S., Vol. II, Ch. XI, p. 103.

4. Ibid., Vol. VIII, Ch. CVI, pp. 34, 38.

5. Rāj., VI, vs. 311-13.

6. P.C., Tr. Tawney, p. 72.

### Astrology

Even the field of astrology was not untouched by the women. We find queen Vilāsavati consulting female fortune-tellers in order to have a male child<sup>1</sup>. A Jaina work also refers to a female fortune-teller named Bandhulā<sup>2</sup>.

### Medical Studies

Some women also took interest in medical studies. One woman whose name was Rūsā composed a work on obstetrics<sup>3</sup>. She must have specialised in this particular branch of medical studies. Her work was translated into Arabic in the eighth century.

### Fine and Useful Arts

#### Music and Dance

It is also evident from the literature that women, especially of royal and aristocratic families, were well-versed in music and dance. The courtesans and the Devadāsīs too, it may be pointed out, were well-adept in these arts, as their livelihood <sup>was</sup> mainly based on the exhibition of these arts<sup>4</sup>.

~~It seems that some~~ <sup>special</sup> ~~type of~~ training must have been given to women for cultivating these arts. The Priyadarsika of king

1. Kādambarī, Kāle, p. 91.

2. Upaniti, Book VI, 880.

3. Nadvi, Arab Aur Bhārata Ke Sambandha, p. 122.

4. Infra, pp. 47-9.



Harṣavardhana<sup>1</sup>, the Padma Purāṇa of Raviṣeṇa<sup>2</sup> and the Kathā-saritsāgara of Somadeva<sup>3</sup> definitely testify to the above statement.

The Harṣacarita of Bāṇa says that princess Rājyasrī and her friends were well-up in dance and music<sup>4</sup>. It is said in the Kādambarī that when prince Cḥandrāpīda saw Mahāśvetā, she was singing a song in praise of Lord Śiva. She also knew lute-playing<sup>5</sup>. The same book further states that the maidens who were sent for the entertainment of Cḥandrāpīda, were well versed in vocal and instrumental music<sup>6</sup>.

The plays of king Harṣa also reveals that music as an art was cultivated by the women. In the Priyadarsikā, it has been said that queen Vāsavadattā had received the training of lute-playing from Udayana<sup>7</sup>. Āranyakā is also described as a skilled lute-player, ~~while playing the role of queen Vāsavadattā. She very ably played on lute<sup>8</sup>.~~ Malayavatī, the heroine of another play of Harṣa, also knew music<sup>9</sup>. The Ratnāvalī nāṭikā <sup>reveals</sup> states

1. गीतमुच्चापादिगुविशिष्टकन्यकोचित्तर्प सिदायित्वा ----

Priya, Act I, p. 17; ~~and~~ also Act III, p. 63.

2. बालोक्तमयी चक्रे ततोऽपश्यत्तु स कन्यकाम् । गुरुणाविष्ठितां कान्तासंगीतक गृहगण्ठी

Padma Purāṇa, Part I, parva 6, v. 16.

3. It is said that Labdhavara was employed to teach dance and music to the ladies of the harem of king Harivara.

O.S., Vol. IV, Ch. LII, p. 156.

4. H.C., Ch. IV, pp. 113-14.

5. Kādambarī, Tr. Kālā, pp. 179-80.

6. Ibid, p. 251.

7. Priya, Act I, p. 63.

8. Ibid, Act III, pp. 64, 66.

9. Nāgā, Act I, p. 13.



that even the maid-servants knew dance and music<sup>1</sup>.

The Dhūrtākhyāna of Haribhadra Sūri (C. 788-820 A.D.) tells us that ladies were well-versed in dance and music<sup>2</sup>. The Padma Purāṇa of Raviṣeṇa and the Mahāpurāṇa of Jinasena also refer to talented ladies who were well up in dance and music<sup>3</sup>.

Rājasekhara also speaks of the cultivation of these fine arts by women. He tells us that women used to dance and sing on the joyous occasions<sup>4</sup>. He also refers to the wives of herdsmen who knew vocal music<sup>5</sup>. The Kathāsaritsāgara refers frequently to women who were well-versed in dance and music<sup>6</sup>. In the Naisadhiyacaritam it is said that Damayanti had a sweet voice and knew music. <sup>Even the</sup> Gandharva women <sup>went to</sup> had also come to learn music from her<sup>7</sup>.

Abdul Rahman, an author of the twelfth century, also speaks of dances and music which were performed <sup>by women</sup> in various seasons.

1. Ratnā, Act I, p. 27.

2. Dhūrtākhyāna, p. 38.

3. Padma Purāṇa, Part I, parva 3, v. 263; parva 7, v. 15; parva 8, v. 520; parva 30, v. 62; parva 24, vs. 5-7; Part II, parva 38, vs. 128-30; parva 39, vs. 53-6; Mahāpurāṇa, parva 37, v. 93; parva 46, v. 299; parva 70, v. 268; parva 74, v. 270; parva 75, v. 327.

4. Viddha, Act IV, p. 109.

5. गीत-लीलावली

Karp., Act I, p. 213.

6. O.S., Vol. IV, Ch. LXI, p. 156; Vol. VI, Ch. LXXI, p. 41, Ch. LXXIV, p. 143; Vol. VII, Ch. C1(I), pp. 158-60; Vol. IX, Ch. CXX, p. 10, Ch. CXXIII, p. 32.

7. Naisadha, canto VI, vs. 59, 65, pp. 173-4.

In autumn, they along with their husbands used to dance rāsas and sing various songs.<sup>1</sup> In the spring girls used to sing with their friends merrily.<sup>2</sup> They used to sing carcaris with tālas.<sup>3</sup> In Bengal also special importance was given to dance and music and consequently, the ladies were well-adept in these arts. The Manassā-mangala, a collection of poems gives the epithet Nāchunī to Behulā for she attained perfection in dance. By performing an impressive dance, she is said to have brought to life her dead husband.<sup>4</sup>

These references, it may be pointed out, may not be taken at their face value. However, they are helpful in forming a general idea about the cultivation of fine arts. As regards the historical references, we may quote the names of some eminent queens of Karanāṭaka who were well-versed in dance and music. Lokasahādevī, the chief queen of the Chalukyan king Vikramāditya II, honoured musicians and dancers and gave them many privileges and thus encouraged them to develop these arts.<sup>5</sup> She herself must have had some knowledge of music.

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1. श्री रसुङ्ग रत्न रसुङ्ग मङ्गल

Sandesa Rāsaka, p. 68, 167.

2. Ibid, Eng. Tr. pp. 92, 202.

3. Ibid, Eng. Tr. pp. 93, 219.

4. T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 198.

5. Q.J.M.S., Vol. XLV, July 1954, p. 3.

Sāntaladevī, the senior queen of Hoysala king Viśṇu-  
vardhana (12th century A.D.) has been termed in an inscription  
as "a crest-jewel in dancing, a sarasvatī in singing"<sup>1</sup>. These  
titles indicate her proficiency in music and dance.

The sculptured specimen<sup>2</sup> also reveal that women knew the  
art of music. Many scenes carved <sup>in</sup> on the temples of Khajurāho  
suggest that women knew the use of flute<sup>2</sup>, lyre and Ektārā<sup>3</sup>.  
The intricate and difficult dance poses of women<sup>4</sup>, as depicted  
in these temples, testify to the fact that ~~women~~<sup>they</sup> were very  
skilful dancers. Three female figures appear <sup>in</sup> on the temple of  
Belūr, Mysore. One of them is beating a drum and the other is  
holding cymbals<sup>5</sup>. It indicates that women knew how to play on  
these instruments. These scenes may be taken to represent the  
condition of the contemporary society and can not be the result  
of the imagination of the artistes. It has been indicated that  
in the Hindu period every fashionable woman knew these fine arts

1. Ibid, p. 12.

2. Left outside Viśvanātha temple, right outside Ādinātha temple,  
left outside Lakṣmaṇa temple, inner pradakṣiṇā Viśvanātha temple.

3. Left outside Lakṣmaṇa temple, right pillar Mandap Lakṣmaṇa  
temple, right outside Viśvanātha temple, right outside Vāmana  
temple.

4. Small temple on the left front of Lakṣmaṇa temple, right  
outside Lakṣmaṇa temple, left inner pradakṣiṇā Viśvanātha  
temple, right outside Ādinātha temple.

U. Agarwal, Khajurāho Sculptures <sup>a</sup> And Their Significance,  
Ch. IX, pp. 168-9.

5. A. Goswami, Indian Temple Sculpture, plate 114.

but with the advent of the Muslims women became less interested in them. It has been pointed out that sometimes their reputation in these arts made them fall prey to the Muslims who used to seize them for their entertainment.<sup>1</sup> The Mymensingh Ballads and other records testify to this fact. But it was not the general state of affair and should not be exaggerated.

### Painting

Besides possessing the knowledge of music and dance, women also knew the art of painting and drawing. Various literary sources as well as the evidence of art reveals to us that painting and drawing were popular among women. Bana tells us that on the auspicious occasion of the wedding of princess Rājyasrī, women decorated the necks of the jars with water colour paintings. They skilfully painted leaves and plants and adorned the earthen wares.<sup>2</sup> He further hints at this art of women.<sup>3</sup> In the Ratnavali of king Harṣa Sagarika and Sasangata are depicted as sketching pictures.<sup>4</sup> On the basis of the Malatīmādhavam, we can say that Malatī was proficient in painting.<sup>5</sup> In the Kuttanīmatam Manjari is described as sketching a picture of Kṛṣṇa Vatsarāja.<sup>6</sup> Some women

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1. T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 199.

2. H.C., Ch. IV, p. 124.

3. Kādambarī, Tr. Kale, p. 251.

4. Ratna, Act II, pp. 58, 61.

5. M.M., Act I, p. 69.

6. Kutta, v. 807.

possessed such an excellent knowledge of painting that their work could be differentiated from that of men only by the connoisseurs<sup>1</sup>. In the Upamitibhavaprapaṇcākhā it is said that Mayuramañjarī painted a diptych<sup>2</sup>. The Tilakamañjarī of Dhanapāla also <sup>reveals</sup> proves the popularity of painting among women<sup>3</sup>. The Navasahasāṅkacarita also throws light on this <sup>art</sup> qualification of women<sup>4</sup>. A Jaina work of the eleventh century refers to two princesses who could tell the underlying ideas of a painted picture<sup>5</sup>.

The Kathasaritsāgara tells us that some women could paint such a lively picture that it was difficult to believe it to be merely a picture<sup>6</sup>. The Naisadhiyacaritam states that Damayantī and her friends were good painters<sup>7</sup>.

~~It appears that in Bengal ladies were well-equipped with the knowledge of many aspects of painting and drawing. The Mymensingh Ballads~~ <sup>throwing light on the conditions of Bengal,</sup> gives an elaborate description of ~~her~~ Kajalarekha ~~depicts~~ her skill in painting and drawing. She was well conversant with this art, otherwise she could not <sup>have</sup> ~~make~~ such a good piece of painting<sup>8</sup>.

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1. Viddha, Act I, v. 35.

2. Upamiti, Book VI, 890-91.

3. Tilakamañjarī, pp. 138, 363.

4. N.C., canto VI, v. 30.

5. A.M.K., vs. 47-73.

6. O.S., Vol. VIII, Ch. GI, p. 139.

7. Naisadha, canto VI, v. 74, canto XX, v. 77.

8. Mymensingh Ballads, pp. 268-9

quoted in Aspects of Bengali Society, pp. 195-6.

The Khajurāho sculptures that depict <sup>many</sup> all the aspects of social life, also include scenes depicting women painting on a wall or a board. In one of the scenes a woman is shown standing in a dance pose and with her right hand she is painting something on the wall<sup>1</sup>. In another scene a woman is seen painting on a wall, the depiction of the branches of a tree on it indicates that they were sketched by her<sup>2</sup>. A woman with a colour-pot is also visible in the sculptures of one of the temples<sup>3</sup>. The depiction of a woman with a brush and painting board<sup>4</sup> is also found in the Viśvanātha temple.

#### Needlework

It seems that some women knew needlework also, though the sewn clothes were not much popular in our time. The fashionable ladies, it may be said, used to wear embroidered and sewn clothes. Chanarāma in his Dharmamāṅgala poems has given a vivid description of needlework prepared by Surikṣa<sup>5</sup>.

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1. Outside left back Viśvanātha temple; left outside Kāṇḍariā temple; inner pradakṣiṇā Kāṇḍariā temple; right outside Vāmana temple; inside Viśvanātha temple.

2. Right side Vāmana temple.

3. Left outside Pārśvanātha temple.

4. Left outside Viśvanātha temple;

U. Agarwal - Khajurāho Sculptures <sup>a</sup> And Their Significance, -  
Ch. IX, p. 167.

5. "Surikṣa brought a very fine needle and with its help she made two big plates of leaves as well as cups of various sizes also of the same material, no less than one hundred in number, for serving fifty kind of curries. On them she made very nice pictorial representations and finally made vessels for serving drinking water with such tiny things as tamarind leaves".

T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 198.



### Spinning and Weaving

Some women also knew the art of weaving and spinning. Medhātithi tells us that ~~in the~~ (ninth century) spinning was the means of livelihood for the poor widows<sup>1</sup>. The Dāyabhāga of Jīmūtavāhana indicates that women used to earn money by spinning and other mechanical arts<sup>2</sup>.

### Acting

Some of the literary sources indicate that women took interest in the art of acting and sometimes used to stage a drama for ~~the~~ entertainment. The Karpūramāñjarī of Rājasekhara was staged at the request of his wife Avantisundarī. The Priyadarsikā informs that Sāṅkṛtyāyini prepared the story of king Udayana and queen Vāsavadattā in the form of a drama<sup>3</sup>. The role of Vāsavadattā was assigned to Āraṇyaka, and Manorama had to play the role of the king; it seems that they were competent enough to play these important roles<sup>4</sup>.

In the Kuttanīmatam it is said that Māñjarī had the knowledge of Bharata's Nāṭyasastra<sup>5</sup>.

### Administrative and Military Training

The history of <sup>the early medieval period contains names of some</sup> India ~~abounds in references of~~ such queens who took the rein of administration in their hands and ruled admirably. The Bhaumakara dynasty of Orissā in which six queens

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1. Medh. on Manu, V, 155.

2. Dāya, Ch. IV, Sec. I, 18-19.

~~Infra, p.~~

3. Priya, Act III, p. 41.

4. Ibid, p. 53.

5. Kuttā, vs. 1007-8.



ascended the throne, the history of Kāśmīra where Sugandhā, Diddā, Jayamati ruled successfully, the history of Chalukya dynasty in which Vijayabhattachārikā, Śīlamahadevī, Akkadevī etc. were good administrators, and the history of Gujrat where Mayanalladevī ruled during the minority of her son, illustrate the above statement.<sup>1</sup> They could not have administered the affairs of the kingdoms without receiving some training in politics and administration.

Some women were also well-up in war tactics. We find some of them fighting shoulder to shoulder with their husbands, and also independently, as the leaders of armies. Queen Mayanamati of Kāmarūpa, queen Sillā of king Sussala of Kāśmīra, Queen Rānīkai of king Dahir of Sindh, queen Maikidevī of Gujrat, and queen Kurnadevī of Kevāla, were the noted women of this category.<sup>2</sup> It is thus clear that sometimes princesses used to receive administrative and military training. They received the administrative training after having grown up, and military training was imparted to them when they were quite young.<sup>3</sup> They used to receive training in weapon-handling, horse-riding, hunting and swimming. Not only princesses, but some ordinary women associated with the court were also well-trained in the use of weapons. Bana describes a female door-keeper on whose left side a sword was hanging. She must have had the knowledge of the use of that weapon.<sup>4</sup> Some women bearing arms are also depicted in Khajurāho temples.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Infra*, Ch. VI, pp. 197-205.

2. *Ibid*, pp.

3. Altekar, *Prāchīna Bhārtiya Śikṣana Paddhati*, Ch. IX, p. 167.

4. Kadambarī, Kāle, p. 8.

5. Sculptures on Jaina Temples, Viśvanātha temple; Kandarīa Jagdambī and Vāmana Temples; U. Agarwal, *The Khajurāho Sculptu-*

### Hunting

Hunting seems to have been one of the favourite pastimes of princesses. We find in a legend that princess Mallikā knew hunting well.<sup>1</sup> She did not need any weapons for killing tigers whom she used to kill with her own hands. She also killed wild animals with her short sword.

### Education through Amusement

To listen to the Purāṇic and other stories was a favourite pastime of the women. Pāṇa mentions some female ascetics who knew the stories of history and Purāṇas and narrated them to queen Vilāsavati.<sup>2</sup> In the Chandāikāvya a woman shows her wide knowledge of the Purāṇic stories.<sup>3</sup>

Women also organised kīrtans, Jātrās, Bratakathās and Rūpakathās.<sup>4</sup> They were not merely the means of recreation, but indirectly helped them in gaining religious knowledge.

### Education of Courtesans and Devadāsīs

The institutions of courtesans and Devadāsīs had acquired considerable significance during the early medieval period. Here we have to see what education they received. Indeed they received training in dance and music without which they could not be able to carry on their profession.

It is evident from a story of the Dasakumāracarita that the mother of prostitute had taught her daughter various sciences

1. T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 202.

2. Kadambarī, Kalo's ed., p. 131.

3. T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 203.

4. Ibid, p. 203.

and arts that were useful for her profession. Besides teaching her fine arts, she gave her the knowledge of grammar, logic and philosophy<sup>1</sup>. She herself must have had knowledge of all these subjects. In the same book a courtesan is described as giving discourse <sup>on</sup> of Dharma, Artha and Kāma<sup>2</sup>.

The Śrīngāraṃjanīkathā deals with the story of a courtesan who had the knowledge of two kinds of sixty-four arts<sup>3</sup>. She seems to be well-educated, for, the author describes her qualities which only an educated lady can possess<sup>4</sup>. Her mother had also the knowledge of various arts<sup>5</sup>.

The Kathāsaritsāgara also tells us that Rūpanikā's mother trained many courtesans<sup>6</sup>. That the courtesans were trained under a teacher<sup>7</sup>, is also evident from the Rājatarāṅgiṇī of Kalhaṇa<sup>7</sup>. Kṣemendra gives a list of sixty-four arts cultivated by the courtesans<sup>8</sup>. Merutunga in his Prabandhacintāmaṇi narrates an interesting incident <sup>which</sup> that shows the intelligence of a hetaera who is described as a favourite of goddess Sarasvatī<sup>9</sup>. He also refers to another hetaera who solved a problem set forth by king Bhoja<sup>10</sup>.

1. D.C., later part, Uch. II, p. 133.

2. Ibid, pp. 140-2.

3. प्रकृष्टी (उ) मयकुः षष्टिमाने

Ś.M.K., Ed. Kalplata Munshi, p. 12, See Appendix A.

4. Ibid, p. 12.

5. Ibid, p. 20.

6. O.S., Vol. I, Ch. XII, p. 140.

7. Rāj., VIII, 131.

8. Kalāvilāsa, canto IV, vs. 2-11.

9. P.C., Tr. Tawney, Ch. II, p. 66.

10. Ibid. p. 68.

The dancing girls who were attached to temples were called Devadāsīs. They received special training in the art of dancing and singing.

King Jayāpīḍa, who was ruling over Kāśmīra in the ninth century, saw in a temple some devadāsīs who were performing dance according to the Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata<sup>1</sup>.

An inscription tells us that there were four hundred devadāsīs in the chief temple of Tanjore<sup>2</sup>.

It is known from the account of Ibn Asir that five hundred dancing girls were employed in the temple of Somanātha<sup>3</sup>.

~~It may be inferred from the above indited account that~~ <sup>thus it appears</sup> courtesans and devadāsīs were educated not only in their own art but also in other fields of education.

#### Contribution of Women to the Development of Education

Some of the ladies of royal and rich families were interested in the progress of education. The queens of Kāśmīra deserve special mention in this respect. The Rājataranginī of Kalhana tells us that queen Vākpuṣṭā, the wife of king Tunjīna gave two villages as 'agrahāra' to the Brāhmanas<sup>4</sup>. Many <sup>other</sup> queens

1. Rāj., IV, 423.

2. Ins. of Rājaraṇja, S.I.I., p. 259.

3. Elliot, H.I., <sup>Vol II,</sup> p. 472.

4. सा मुतिविषयोदग्रमुहारं दिव्यमनाम् । तनी कनीचुर्न नरे रामुर्न चापकल्पना ॥

Rāj., II, 55. It may be pointed out that in ancient India, kings used to invite Brāhmanas on auspicious occasions and ~~used to give some villages for their lodging, and donate the full income to them.~~ <sup>maintenance</sup> These villages were called ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> 'Agrahāra'. Free education of Sanskrit and the Śāstras ~~were~~ given there, and thus they became the centres of ~~higher~~ education.

also erected vihāras which were famous as the centres of learning. Amṛtaprabhā, the wife of king Meghavāhana, built a vihāra <sup>called</sup> of the ~~name of~~ Amṛtabhavana<sup>1</sup>. A vihāra was erected in the Nadavana by another wife of the same king<sup>2</sup>. ~~Yet~~ <sup>yet</sup> his <sup>me</sup> another wife erected a vihāra of the name of Indradevībhavana<sup>3</sup>. It appears that these vihāras were built by the wives of this king as a result of competition between them. Prakāśadevī, the wife of king Chandrapīḍa built a Prakāśikāvihāra<sup>4</sup>. Queen Jayamatī also erected two vihāras and a matha<sup>5</sup>. But the vihāra built by Ratnadevī surpassed all the existing vihāras <sup>as it was considered</sup> ~~the best vihāra on the earth~~<sup>6</sup>.

It is said that Kumāradevī, the wife of king Govindacandra (c. 1100-70 A.D.) erected a vihāra at Sāranātha<sup>7</sup>.

A Jaina inscription (C. 1119 A.D.) refers to a Paṭṭasālā (reading room) which was founded by the mother and the sister of Balla or Ballana<sup>8</sup>. It states that after the death of this religious-minded merchant, they erected the Paṭṭasālā to commemorate his memory.

1. Ibid., III, 9.

2. Ibid., III, 11-13.

3. Ibid., III, 13.

4. Ibid., IV, 79.

5. Ibid., VIII, 246-8.

6. सर्वप्रतिष्ठाप्रदत्तं विहारः प्रथमं मतः ।

Ibid., VIII, 2402.

7. Sāranātha Ins. of Kumāradevī queen of the Gaḥadavāla Govindacandra, E.I. Vol. IX, p. 323.

8. Chandragiri Parvat par ke Śilālekha, Jaina Śilālekhasaṁgraha, p. 84.

These viharas, mathas and Pattasālas must have contributed much in the progress and development of education among the people. Their erection by the upper class ladies proves that they were interested in the progress of education.

### Education and Economic Independence

Although the aim of education was not to make women economically independent, yet in times of difficulty they could use their training and education for earning money. In Bengal some women used to augment the resources of the family by spinning, weaving etc.<sup>1</sup> The evidence of Medhatithi (c. 900 A.D.) indicates that widows sometimes lived on spinning.<sup>2</sup> It is well-known that courtesans used to earn money by showing their talent in dance and music. The mention of lady teachers in some literary works of the period suggests that sometimes women could earn money through the teaching profession.

### The Causes of Deterioration of Literary Education among the Women of the Masses

We have already seen that women of royal, cultured and rich families used to be well-educated, but such families were very few in the society. Unfortunately this was not the case with the women of ordinary families. Most of them, we may say, were uneducated and could only receive training of household affairs in their own homes. These families were unable to spend money for the education of their girls.

1. R.C. Majumdar, History of Bengal, Vol. I, p. 610;

Dāya, Ch. IV, Sec. I, 18-19.

2. पुनर्पतिवर्गा अनपत्याया अति महानादी इति के व कर्ममहिना केन विदुषायेन

वेदव्या : ।

Ch. Manu, V, 155.

3774-10  
1757

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The lawgivers also did not permit them to study the śāstras. Asahāya, who wrote his commentary on the Nārada Smṛti in the eighth century A.D., was of the view that on account of the lack of the knowledge of the śāstras, women could not distinguish between 'dharma' and 'adharma'.<sup>1</sup>

(A century later Medhātithi also said that there was no need of much education for the women for the performance of their duties. They could be benefitted by their husbands' education whenever the need arose<sup>2</sup>).

One of the main reasons of this deteriorating condition of education among the women was the denial of Upanayana to them and the performance of their marriage at an early age. Almost all the lawgivers were of the opinion that the girl should be given away in marriage at an early age<sup>3</sup>, and some of them like Yājñavalkya, Bṛihaspati, Yama and Parāśara considered the father censurable, if he failed to give <sup>his</sup> her daughter in marriage before puberty<sup>4</sup>.

These lawgivers must have exercised considerable influence in the later centuries too. While giving his impressions on of India, Alberuni had <sup>wrote</sup> ~~written~~ in the eleventh century that the Hindus perform <sup>ed</sup> ~~the~~ marriages of their daughters at an early age,

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1. शास्त्राध्ययनानधिकारत्वात् शास्त्रात्रोपजीवि कर्त्तव्यज्ञानाभावात्  
वस्वतस्तद्व्ययम् ।

On Nārada, 13.30.

2. स्त्रीणां कर्तुं विधिव प्रसंगादुपकरोति ।

Medh. on Manu, II, 16.

3. Manu, IX, 88, 94; Yāj, III, 52; Bṛihaspati, XXIV, 3;

Br. Yama, III, 19-22.

4. Yāj., III, 64; Bṛihaspati, XXIV, 3; Yama, III, 22; Parāśara, 7, 6-8.



and that no Brāhmaṇa could allow her daughter to remain unmarried till the age of twelve.<sup>1</sup>

Naturally in such circumstances women could not be expected to receive much education and the guardians too did not attach value to this aspect, as they were worried at getting suitable matches for them, which was becoming increasingly difficult as a result of the growing rigidity of caste.

It may be said that the slack discipline of the centres of learning was also responsible for the deterioration of education. The Bauddha viharas were famous for their high moral ideals. But later on we find that Buddhism was transformed into Tāntricism. Consequently there came a moral laxity in the behaviour and the character of the teachers and students, and the guardians did not deem it proper to send their daughters to these centres. Kālhana narrates an incident of abducting the wife of a king by a monk through his magical power. The king became irritated and burnt many monasteries and took back the villages which he had given them in charity.<sup>2</sup> The people must have treated it as an eye-opener. Buddhism allowed unmarried girls to become nuns, but due to the corrupted atmosphere of the Saṅgha people must not have liked their entry in the Saṅgha and tried to perform their marriage at an early age.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Sachau, Vol. II, p. 131.

2. Raj., II, 199-200.

3. Basham, The Wonder That was India, p. 178.

This view may be correct for the earlier period but during the period of our study Buddhism was in the state of decline. In an atmosphere characterised by the continued invasions of Muslims in the later part of this period, and the incessant feudal warfare, the common women could not have dared to go outside due to fear. With the rule of Muslims the purdah system also came into greater vogue which to some extent formed a hurdle in the education of the women<sup>1</sup> too. It is interesting to note that in the Prabandhakosā, a princess is shown writing verses dictated by the teacher from behind the purdah.<sup>2</sup> But such instances might not have been many and the purdah may certainly be taken to have hindered female education in this period.

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1. Basham, op. cit., p. 179.

2. P.K. Madanakīrtiprabandha, p. 64.

## Chapter II

### Marriage

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The importance of the marriage ritual has been recognised by every country and caste, for it shows the way of leading an arranged and pious life, and is helpful in building a healthy and clean society. In a Hindu's life, it occupies a very significant place. A great sanctity and importance has been attached to the Grahassthāśrama.<sup>1</sup> Marriage is a sacrament which in the normal course must be performed for every woman and man at a proper age and time. Medhātithi (c. 900 A.D.), a well-known commentator of Manu, considers it "a sacrament, a refining process, as is indicated by the accusative ending in bhāryām".<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the significance of marriage is also established by the fact that the Sūdras for whom other sacraments were forbidden, were considered eligible for this samskāra.<sup>3</sup>

Marriage was a social, personal and religious necessity. It had three main purposes<sup>4</sup> - the performance of household sacrifices in the married life helped in the promotion of religion, it enabled a man to have progeny to offer libation to the forefathers and to continue the family, and thirdly it satisfied the sexual desires.

1. Manu, III, 77-8, VI, 89-90.

2. विवाहविधिः संस्कारकर्म भाव्यामिति द्वितेयानिर्देशात् ।

Medh. on Manu, III, 4.

3. विवाहमात्रं संस्कारं सुवीक्ष्य तत्पतो हव ।

V.M.S., p. 134.

4. A.L. Basham, *The Wonder That was India*, Ch. V, p. 165.

The Dharmasāstra attached great importance to marriage and the gr̥hasthāśrama.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of a woman, marriage had more importance. It is said in this context that what Upanayana Saṁskāra was for the boys, marriage was for the girls.<sup>2</sup> According to Yājñavalkya and his commentators, the marriage ceremony of a woman could be performed by the citation of sacred mantras whereas all other sacraments were performed without these mantras.<sup>3</sup> Marriage was obligatory for a woman. Every lawgiver has instructed the father to give his daughter in marriage and not to let an unmarried girl stay in his house for a long time.<sup>4</sup> Here, it is interesting to note that Manu had advised the father to let the girl remain unmarried throughout her life, if a suitable match was not available. Lakṣmīdhara (12th century), while explaining this view, said that the stress was on the suitable match and it did not mean that a girl who had attained puberty, should be detained in the house. He was of the opinion that a nubile unmarried girl should not be allowed to remain in her father's house.<sup>5</sup>

1. वररुचि चरित्रे संज्ञाः।

K.K.G., p. 7.

2. Medh. and Kullūka on Manu, II, 67; Supra, pp.

3. Yāj. I, 13.

समन्वितं एव

Viśva on Yāj. I, 13.

विवाहं पुनः समन्वितं

Apararka on Yāj. I, 13.

4. न चिरं दास्येत्कन्यां स्वामीप्राप्तकालीं मुनेः।

Devala quoted in K.K.G., p. 409.

5. गृहादीनाम न देयेत्यतः तत्प्राप्त्यर्थम्, राजसूता तु न प्राप्याः।

K.K.G., p. 33.

### Forms of Marriage

The traditional eight types of marriage enumerated in the Dharmasāstra works<sup>1</sup>, are the Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa, Prajāpatya, Āsura, Cāṇḍharva, Rākṣasa and Paśācha. The definitions of these forms as given in these works are almost the same. A comprehensive study of each of them is not necessary for our purpose.

To invite a man who had learnt the Vedas and was of good conduct, and to give him the gift of a well-dressed and well-honoured daughter was the Brāhma form of marriage.<sup>2</sup> Medhātithi and Kullūka the two famous commentators of Manu opined that the dressing and worshipping were meant neither for the bride, nor for the bridegroom exclusively, but were to be taken in relation to both of them.<sup>3</sup>

The gift of a daughter, dressed with ornaments, to a priest

1. A.G.S., 1, 6; G.D.S., 4, 6-13; Manu, III, 21; Yāj. I, 58-61.

2. स्तेनाच्छादनाईणेन कन्याया वरस्य चान्यतसम्बन्धे  
Manu, III, 27.

3. प्रमाणामावाददुभयौषयोगः कार्यः ।

Medha. on Manu, III, 27.

अच्छादनमात्रस्यैवीचित्यप्राप्तत्वात्त विशेषवाससा कन्यावरावाच्छायात्तकारादिना  
च पूजयित्वा ।

Kullūka on Manu, III, 27.

who performed a sacrifice in a proper way, was the Daiva form of marriage.<sup>1</sup> As the daughter was given to the priest who performed a sacrifice, it seems that there must have been the feeling of obliging the priest in the mind of the father. In this way the Daiva form was deemed as inferior to the Brahma form.<sup>2</sup>

To give away the daughter to the bridegroom after taking from him a cow or a bull or both of them (for the purpose of performing religious rites) was called the Ārsa form of marriage.<sup>3</sup> Medhātithi opined that the gift was given to the bride's father who accepted it, but not with the spirit of selling the daughter, as there was no chance for higher or lower demand.<sup>4</sup> Kullūka was of the opinion that the gift was accepted either to be given away to the bride or for the performance of religious sacrifice.<sup>5</sup> Some Lawgivers held that the acceptance of a cow or a bull was a kind of bride price, but this view does not seem to have been correct. Manu himself had said that one should not accept

1. Manu, III, 28.

2. Medh. on Mamu, III, 28.

3. Manu, III, 29.

4. सर्वे स्वर्गं नाम विद्वत्पुत्रक कर्मिणा उदयनीपत्नीराजपुत्राणां विद्वत्पुत्रक

Nedh. on Maru, III, 29.

५. यागादि विजये कथादि वा शत्रुं न तु शुक्लपुण्या वृत्तीत्या ।

Kullūka on Mānu, III, 29.



even a small amount of money for the gift of the daughter, for he who did so, was called a seller of the daughter.<sup>1</sup>

"May both of you perform your duties together" — when with this blessing and due respect the father gave away the daughter to the bridegroom, it was the *Prājāpatya* form of the marriage.<sup>2</sup> Medhātithi held that the bridegroom should be instructed to announce that he accepted the condition.<sup>3</sup>

In the *Āsura* form the bridegroom got the bride, after having given at his own will as much money as he could to the kinsmen of the bride and to the bride.<sup>4</sup> In the *Āśva* form the *Śāstras* restricted the gift to a cow or a bull, but in this form there was no such restriction. The will of the giver depended on the beauty, character and qualities of the bride.<sup>5</sup>

The union of a maiden and the bridegroom at their own will was called the *Gāndharva* form of marriage.<sup>6</sup> The name of this form itself explains its nature. The *Gandharvas* are the spirits of

1. Manu, III, 53.

2. Manu, III, 30.

3. Medh. on Manu, III, 30.

4. Manu, III, 31.

5. स्वाह्व्यात् स्वेच्छा न शास्त्रत इत्याचार्यदेवमाह । तत्र हि शास्त्रं नित्यमव्ययम् ।  
एकं गोमयुतमिति । इह तु कथाया स्वसौम्यादिगुणविशेषः ।

Medh. on Manu, III, 31.

The same is the view of Kullūka on Manu, III, 31.

6. Manu, III, 32.

the air and like beautiful women. The only witnesses of this marriage were the Gandharvas and it was inspired by the sexual attraction.

The abduction of a crying and weeping girl by force, after killing or inflicting injuries to her kinsmen and after breaking<sup>1</sup> open their houses, was known as the Rākṣasa form of the marriage. Medhatithi and Kullūka both say that in this form the beating and other cruel acts were not a precondition, and if the kinsmen did not take precautionary steps against the abductor, even then it would be called the Rākṣasa type of marriage.<sup>2</sup>

To approach a girl while she was asleep, intoxicated or unconscious, was called the Paisācha type of marriage which was the basest of all forms.<sup>3</sup> In addition to these eight types of marriage two more forms — the Svayamvara and the Saiva (among the Tantrics only) — were also prevalent in our time.

The Svayamvara, as the name itself suggests, was the girl's self-choice of a bridegroom from amongst the assembled suitors. It seems that this form was the oldest and a famous form of marriage as frequent references to it are found in the Epics and the Purāṇas. On the basis of the Sanskrit sources the Svayamvara may be divided into two categories — the festive Svayamvara as found in other literary sources<sup>4</sup> and the ordinary Svayamvara as recommended by the Smṛitis. The second type

1. Manu, III, 33.

2. Medh. and Kullūka on Manu, III, 33.

3. Manu, III, 34.

4. Infra, pp. 59-61. 64-6

of Svayamvara cannot correctly be termed as a special form of Svayamvara marriage. It is only the injunction of the lawgivers entitling a girl who had reached the age of puberty, to choose her own life-partner, if her guardians had failed to marry her at the proper age.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that in such an act the girl was free to exercise her own discretion and in doing so no result <sup>fault</sup> could be attached to her. The man selected in such an act had not to pay sulka to the guardian of the girl, as the latter lost his authority over her. Perhaps this was the reason that made the lawgivers reluctant to include this type of Svayamvara in the specified forms of marriage.<sup>2</sup>

The Saiva form is found in the Tāntric texts of the period.<sup>3</sup> It was performed to enable a Tāntric to take part in secret circle worship, if for any reason his wedded wife was unable to act with the worshipper. Thus his Saiva wife, though not living with him, was his wife for all practical purposes.<sup>3 4</sup> Such a wife and her children had a right to maintenance, although the right to inheritance was denied to them. But it may be added that its religious importance was more than the social one.

1. *Infra*, pp. 65-76-1.

2. L. Sternbach, *Juridical Studies in the Ancient Indian Law*,

Part I, p. 387.

3. *Nahānirvāṇa Tantra*, ch. II, 269, 279.

4 3. Thomas, *Indian Women Through the Ages*, p. 279.

The Smṛtis have given various views with regard to the propriety of these forms for the various varṇas. One of the opinions found in the Manu Smṛti suggests that the first six forms were lawful for the Brāhmaṇas, <sup>the</sup> last four for the Kṣatriyas and the Gāndharva, Āsura and Paisāca were fit for the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras.<sup>1</sup> But the Gāndharva or the Rākṣasa, either separately or the combination of both, were commendable for the Kṣatriyas.<sup>2</sup> The prevalence of the Gāndharva among all the varṇas was noticed by Nārada.<sup>3</sup> It indicates that this form was becoming comparatively popular in the society in the period of the Nārada-smṛti.

The earlier views regarding the suitability of the eight forms of marriage for the various varṇas remained current during the early medieval period also. But the distinguishing feature of this period was the recognition of the Rākṣasa form as commendable for the Kṣatriyas.<sup>4</sup> It may be remarked that this was the period of feudalism and warfare.<sup>5</sup> The Kṣatriyas, who belonged to the ruling class took pride in winning brides

1. Manu, III, 23.

2. Ibid, 26.

3. Nārada, XII, 40.

4. केवलं क्षत्रियस्यैव प्रशस्तित्वं रक्षसः ।

Devala quoted in K.K.G., p. 73;

ब्राह्मणस्य प्रथमं पठितं ब्राह्मणमावीक्ष्यतुरा । क्षत्रियस्य रक्षसमेकमेव । वैश्यशूद्रयोरसुरा ।

एतच्छिष्टं क्षत्रियो जानन्ति ।

Kullūka on Manu, III, 24.

5. B.N.S. Yadava, *Chivalry and Some Aspects of Warfare on the Eve of the Muslim Conquest of Northern India*, p. 12, University of Allahabad Studies, 1966.

through this type of marriage. As such this form was regarded as very much suited to the Ksatriyas.<sup>1</sup> The Gāndharva form was also quite popular among the ruling class as this class represented a comparably free element in the society.<sup>2</sup>

One or two references to the Brāhma marriage are found in the Rajputa history. The most popular example of it was the marriage of the <sup>C</sup>chāhamāna prince Viśaladeva III with princess Rājamatī of the Paramāra dynasty.<sup>3</sup> King Vīgraharāja IV and the Tomara princess Desāladevī were also married through this form. But it may be called the mixture of the Brāhma and Gāndharva forms in as much as the princess was in love with him. The king gratefully accepted the message sent by the princess.<sup>4</sup>

Scanty references to the Prājāpatya form of ~~the~~ marriage are <sup>found</sup> ~~notable~~ <sup>the</sup> in Uttarapurāṇa - a Jaina work of the ninth century A.D. It says that the marriage of princess Jyotirmālā with prince Arkakīrtī was performed by this form.<sup>5</sup>

1. Kullūka, loc. cit.

2. Cf. R.B. Pandey, Hindu Saṃskāras, Ch. VIII, p. 163.

3. V.R., V. 13.

4. I.A. Vol. XX, pp. 204-5.

5. अर्ककीर्तिः कुमारस्य ज्योतिर्मालां वधाधियाः ।  
प्राजापत्य विवाहेन महत्या सम्पदप्राप्तिम् ॥

5. Uttara Purāṇa, parva 62, v. 151.

We find some actual examples of the Rākṣasa form of marriage also. The Rāṣṭrakūṭa prince Indra I forcibly took away princess Bhavanāgā of the Chaulukya dynasty from her marriage assembly. It may thus be termed as Rākṣasa form of marriage.<sup>1</sup> As this form was regarded as especially suited<sup>2</sup> to the Kṣatriyas, it might have become more common than ever before.

If the adage 'the literature is the mirror of the contemporary society' is true, the literature of our period is a good proof of the prevalence of the gāndharva-marriage to some extent among the royal families. The Priyadarśikā of Harṣa speaks of the validity of the gāndharva marriage.<sup>3</sup> The same idea may be noticed in the Kadambarī also.<sup>4</sup> The Upaniṭibhavaṇaprapaṇcā-kathā abounds in references to love-marriages<sup>5</sup> and the same may be said with regard to the Kathāsaritsāgara.<sup>6</sup> It may be argued that the last mentioned work is based on earlier tradition and thus it may not be taken to represent the social conditions of this period, but the evidence of this text has got to be put along side those of the other texts.

Svayamvara, a popular form of marriage in the Epics, was also in vogue in our period. If the evidences of the Vikramāṅka-devacarita of Bilhana, the Dvāśrayakāvya of Hemacandra, and the Prithvirājaraso of Chand Bardai, be taken to be historically true,

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1. E.I. Vol. XVIII, p. 235.

2. Supra, p. 58. 62.

3. राक्षसविहित एव गण्यते विवाहः ।  
Priya, Act III, p. 71.

4. Kadambarī, p. 413.

5. Upaniṭi, pp. 253 ff.

6. O.S., Vol. I, Ch. III, p. 23, Ch. VI, pp. 61, 68, Ch. X, p. 116  
Ch. XI, p. 187; Vol. II, Ch. XVIII, p. 66.



it may be said that the svayamvara was <sup>fairly prevalent</sup> ~~not altogether conspicuous~~ by its absence in the period under survey. ~~These works testify to the prevalence of svayamvara~~ among the royal families. Bilhana mentions the Svayamvara of princess Candaladevī or Candiralekhā in which she selected prince Vikramāṅka (Chalukya Vikramāditya VI, c. 1076-1126 A.D.) as her husband<sup>1</sup>. Her svayamvara is as famous in South India as that of Saṁyogitā in Northern India<sup>2</sup>.

Hemacandra speaks of a Svayamvara in which princesses Durlabhadevī and Lakṣmī, the sisters of Chāhamāna king Mahendra of Nādol, selected their life-partners Chaulukya king Durlabha rāja of Gujarat and his brother Nāgarāja respectively<sup>3</sup>. The Svayamvara arranged by king Jayacandra of Kannauj for her daughter Saṁyogitā is well-known<sup>4</sup>. But her marriage with Prthvirāja III may be termed as a mixed union of Rāksasa, Gāndharva and Svayamvara forms. Although her father arranged the Svayamvara, yet Prthvirāja abducted her from the marriage mandapa, and as the bride was also not reluctant to <sup>go with him</sup> ~~do so~~, <sup>Considering all the facts, it may be</sup> ~~it may be~~ regarded as mainly a Gāndharva form.

1. V.D.C., canto VIII, v. 3, canto IX, v. 147.

2. Q.J.M.S., Vol. XLV, July 1954, p. 9.

3. D.K. canto VII, v. 66.

I.A. Vol. IV, pp. 112-3.

4. P.R., Samayas 49-50, pp. 1334-46.

As regards the historicity of Saṁyogitā and Prthvirāja Rāso, the views of Dr. Dasharatha Sharma, <sup>to be</sup> seem quite convincing.

⑧ Early Chauhan Dynasties, Appendix D, pp. 96-9.



The Svayamvara of Damayanti is most famous in the Indian literary tradition. Some works of this period also refer to it<sup>1</sup>. Although these instances prove the existence of this form yet it was ~~generally~~ felt by the Jains that a Svayamvara could not be gone through in an age devoid of Chakravartins, Vāsudevas and Prativāsudevas<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>many</sup> Innumerable references to the svayamvara form of marriage, <sup>of course</sup> found in the Jaina Purāṇas<sup>3</sup>, <sup>which</sup> further give support to this fact. <sup>they</sup> It is significant to note that these Purāṇas deal with the lives of the Chakravartins, Vāsudevas and Prativāsudevas, ~~so the~~ ~~references to the prevalence of svayamvara is justifiable.~~  
Who is the bestower of the girl?

The ancient Lawgivers were of the opinion that the father was the real guardian of an unmarried girl and he protected her in her virginhood<sup>4</sup>. To give his daughter in marriage at a proper time was a sacred and important duty of a father. Even kings were not allowed to be free from it. They had also to think over the marriages of their daughters<sup>5</sup>.

1. Nalavilāsa, Act III, pp. 28, 46-48.

Naiṣadha, cantos X-XIV.

2. K.P., Sukamithunakathānakam, pp. 2-3.

3. Padma Purāṇa, Part I, parva 6, v. 359, parva 13, p. 302;  
 Uttara Purāṇa, parva 46, v. 153, parva 62, vs. 162, 163,  
 parva 63, v. 8, parva 67, v. 214, parva 71, vs. 255, 458,  
 parva 72, v. 206, parva 75, vs. 323-5, 647.

4. Manu, IX, 3, Yaj., I, 85, Vij. on Yaj., I, 85.

5. अन्त्यानां संप्रदानं च

Manu, VII, 152.

But Medhātithi and Kullūka had put on it a political garb by saying that the kings could be able to gain the friendship of other kings by the matrimonial alliances of their daughters. They could marry their daughters in the family of those kings whose relationship could be fruitful in making the kingdoms more stable<sup>1</sup>. History reveals that the kings used to serve the double purposes by marrying their daughters<sup>2</sup>.

Yājñavalkya and his commentators enumerate the list of the relations of the girl, who, in the event of non-availability of the preceding one<sup>2</sup>, could give away the girl in marriage<sup>3</sup>. The father, maternal or paternal grand father, brother, kinsmen and the mother were eligible to do so.

It is significant to note that the name of the mother comes last in the list, the reasons for which are obvious. Being a widow, she naturally had the last right of giving her girl, but at the same time her advice was much valued.

Brhaspati also entitles<sup>d</sup> father to give his daughter away in marriage<sup>4</sup>. Parāśara<sup>a</sup> ~~and giver of precepts~~ (sixth to ninth century A.D.) also <sup>said</sup> says that the father, mother and the elder

#### 1. स्वकार्यसिद्धिर्ज्ञेयं चित्तम्

Medh. on Manu, VII, 152.

दुहितृणां च दानं स्वकार्यसिद्ध्यर्थं निरुपमीतु ।

Kullūka on Manu, VII, 152.

2. It is said that Jayasīṃha Siddha<sup>c</sup>raja gave his daughter in marriage to the Chāhamāna ruler Arṇorāja and thus won his favour.

- D. Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, Ch. V, p. 47.

3. Yāj. I, 63<sup>3</sup>, Viśva, Vij., and Aparārka on Yāj. I, 63.

4. Brhaspati, S.B.E. Vol. XXXIII, Ch. XXIV, v. 3.

brother <sup>were</sup> are responsible to give the girl in marriage to a suitable person<sup>1</sup>.

In accordance with <sup>e</sup>this injunction of the <sup>l</sup>Lawgivers the parents of the girl used to settle the marriage, and often the advice of the bride was also not taken. King Prabhākaravardhana selected Mankharī king Grahavarman as a suitable bridegroom for Rājyasrī and asked the queen to give her opinion in this regard. The queen said that in the marriage of a daughter the father was the sole authority<sup>2</sup>. Then the king settled finally the marriage of Rājyasrī with Grahavarman. But in all these talks, Rājyasrī did not come into the picture. An eighth century drama also echoes the same tendency of the age. It is said ~~there~~ in it that only the father and the destiny were responsible for the marriage of the virgins<sup>3</sup>. The same feeling is depicted in a Jaina work also. Maya Vidyādhara asked his wife as to whom their daughter Mandodarī should be given. She replied humbly that the mothers were responsible only for the bringing up of their daughters and that it was the fathers who were the suitable persons to arrange for their marriage<sup>4</sup>. Thus we see that in common practice the father had the greatest authority to give his daughter in marriage. It seems that girls had no say in the matter of their life-long concern. Even in love-marriages, the parties usually waited for the parents' sanction.

1. Parāśara, VII, 6-9.

2. H.C. Tr. Cowell and Thomas, Ch. IV, p. 123.

3. प्रभवति प्रायः कुमारीणां कथिता देव व

M.M., Act I, p. 111.

4. इत्युक्ता प्राह तं देवी कन्यानां देहपाले । जन्य उपयुज्यन्ते पितरो दानकर्मणि ॥

Padma Purāṇa of Ravisena, Part I, parva 8, v. 10.

Thus in Kuvalayamālā the couples waited for their parents' sanction before marrying.<sup>1</sup>

Somadeva in his Kathāsaritsāgara also refers to a heroine who out of abashment asked her mate to have talk with her father in connection with her marriage.<sup>2</sup> Quite contrary to this, the same text mentions a father's anxiety to know whether his choice of the groom was approved by the girl. He put before his daughter the proposals of four bridegrooms and asked her choice.<sup>3</sup> But this may be an earlier tradition.

The svayamvaras also prove the supremacy of the father. Although being of matured age the girls were free to choose life-companions, yet it is significant to note that the svayamvaras were arranged by their fathers.

#### The Girl's say in the Selection of Her Life-Partner

Sometimes the girls of the royal and aristocratic families had a considerable say in the selection of their life-partners and could apprise their fathers their choice. Mayanalladevi, as the Gujarat chronicles say, was bold enough to ask her father to give her to King Karna of Gujarat (c.1066-93 A.D.). Seeing his daughter firm in her mind, her father allowed her to choose her own life-partner and sent her to the king.<sup>4</sup>

1. Kuvalaya, lines 32-3, p. 168.

2. K.S.S., 27, 81-2.

3. Ibid, 53, 108.

4. P.C., Mr. Tawney, p. 79; A.K. Forbes, Rāmāla, p. 107.

Kāmalatā, the daughter of king Kīrtirāja of the Parmāra dynasty, was successful in getting <sup>her</sup> the life-companion, chosen by her in her childhood, though merely in a joke. When she attained youth, she induced her father to allow her to have the same person as her husband and she gained what she longed for<sup>1</sup>.

In the Visaladeva Rāso we find a reference to a maiden who could even ask her parents to let her remain, unmarried throughout her life<sup>2</sup>.

The literature informs us that some women had courage enough to impose one condition or the other in the matter of their marriages<sup>3</sup>. Some of the stories of the Kathāsaritsāgara <sup>also</sup> inform us that some ladies could have their say in the settlement of their marriages<sup>4</sup>.

The injunctions of <sup>the</sup> many lawgivers are noticeable in this connection. To a matured girl, they allowed the right of self-selection of the groom. It was ordained that after attaining the age of puberty, the girl was to wait for three years in her home. In case her father or the guardian failed to discharge his duty <sup>even then</sup> ~~even then~~, she was free to choose her own husband<sup>5</sup>.

1. P.C. Tr. Tawney, p. 27.

2. V.R., III, 32.

3. वा च पुनराद्भुतं त्वयातिथेन निरुपना कलावीष्टकेन संप्राप्ता योषनं ।  
यदुत यः कलावीष्टकेन मरुः समपि यदि परं वा परिणयति नापरः ॥

Upamiti, p. 454.

4. O.S. Vol. II, Ch. IVII, p. 41, Vol. VII, Ch. LXXXIII, pp. 3, 37  
~~Ch. LXXXVIII, p. 37.~~

5. Manu, IX, 90, Yāj., III, 64, Baudhāyana quoted by Viśva on Yāj., III, 64, G.D.S., IX, II.

Kullūka points<sup>ed</sup> out that after the expiry of the period of three years, in the case of non-availability of<sup>a</sup> better qualified bridegroom, the girl could choose a husband of equal qualifications in her own right<sup>1</sup>. In such a case the couple could not be considered guilty<sup>2</sup>.

Viśvarūpa, Aparārka and Viṇṇaśvara, the commentators of Yājñavalkya, ~~are~~<sup>were</sup> also of the opinion that the girl who had no bestower to give her in marriage, could wait for three years after attaining maturity and thereafter could choose her own husband<sup>3</sup>. Haradatta, a twelfth century commentator of Gautama ~~was~~<sup>expressed</sup> also of the same view<sup>4</sup>.

But this right, though legally given to the girls, was not generally encouraged in the society, as it was against the modesty expected from a girl. Moreover, the lawgivers and their commentators did not allow the girls to take ornaments with them in such marriages, and if they took them, they were considered to be guilty of a sort of theft<sup>5</sup>. <sup>However,</sup> Medhātithi

1. वर्णाश्रयात् पुनरुर्ध्वमधिकं गुणवराहामि समानजातिगुणंवरस्वयंप्रसीत् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 90.

2. उदण्डया स्त्री मदीयं वरं स्वीकृत्य स्वयंप्रसीत् ।

Agni Purāṇa, Ch. 227, v. 41.

3. स्वयमेवर्तुती वर्णाश्रयादुर्ध्वं वरं कुर्याद् दास्यमात्रे

Viśva on Yāj., III, 64.

यदा पुनर्दातुं नाममावस्तदा कन्येवं गम्यं गमनात्मुक्तलक्षणं वरं स्वयमेव वरयेत्

Viṇṇa on Yāj., III, 64.

पित्रादीनामप्राप्ते स्वयमेव कन्यां गम्यं गमनात् स्वयंप्रसीत् कुर्यात् वा पातित्यादि-  
दोषरहितं वरं प्रतीतिं कुर्यात् एतच्च प्राण्योदकात् । इष्टे तु तस्मिन् पित्रादिभ्यु  
सत्स्वयि स्वयमेव कन्या वरं कुर्यात् । न पित्रादिनामप्राप्ते ।

Aparārka on Yāj. III, 64.

4. यदि कन्या—स्वयमेवानिन्दितेन कुलविदाशौलादियुक्तं न पत्रां युज्येत

Hara on G.D.S., IX, II, 20.



(c. 900 A.D.) <sup>did</sup> ~~had done~~ some favour to such girls by laying down that the sacrifice of ornaments was not necessary in all cases. According to him, if the ornaments had been given to the girl<sup>x</sup> before her marriage and the parents had warned her that they did not want to give her to a particular person, <sup>only then</sup> she had to abandon the ornaments in case she selected that very person as her partner<sup>1</sup>.

The right of self-selection of the groom, as given to the matured girl after the expiry of three years from the time of puberty, testifies to the fact that the father <sup>then</sup> ~~ceased~~ to be her guardian in the matter of her marriage.

### The Age of Marriage

In accordance with the above mentioned rule of the Smṛti writers, it was but natural that the father tried to give his daughter in marriage before the commencement of the age of puberty, as he did not want to forfeit this right through the non-fulfilment of his duty in the prescribed time-limit. The dictums of the lawgivers also served as an incentive in this regard. It was ordained that a father who <sup>gave</sup> his daughter in marriage <sup>went</sup> goes to Heaven, but he, whose daughter <sup>remained</sup> is unmarried after puberty, <sup>went</sup> goes to hell<sup>2</sup>. A tendency of lowering the marriageable age of the girls is clearly visible in this period. Manu had given the comparable ages of the bridegroom and the bride as thirty and twelve years respectively, but in special cases a

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1. Medh. on Manu, IX, 92.

2. Parāśara, VII, 8-9.



twenty-four years old man could marry a girl of eight<sup>1</sup>. According to Medhātithi the age of eighth years was the suitable time when the girl could be given in marriage<sup>2</sup>. ~~But~~ <sup>W</sup>while commenting on the verse of Manu (IX, 94) Medhātithi was of the view that the words of Manu did not purport the meaning that a man or girl should be married at the stated age, but they denoted that the girl should be much younger to the man. He further pointed out that the fact that <sup>e</sup>this verse was not included in the section of marriage, proves<sup>d</sup> the flexibility of the rule<sup>3</sup>. Kullūka also held the same view. He was of the opinion that the injunction recommended the suitable time and not a rule. Uptil this age the man was believed to have completed his Vedic studies and become eligible to marry a girl who should be three times younger to him<sup>4</sup>.

Yājñavalkya, did not prescribe any age for the girls as <sup>u</sup>a marriageable age. However, he also wanted the girl to be younger than the man. Visvarūpa and Viṣṇanesvara also dittoed him in this respect<sup>5</sup>.

Other Smṛti writers like Yama<sup>6</sup> (8th C.A.D.), Śaṅkha<sup>7</sup> and

1. Manu, IX, 94.

2. Medh. on Manu, IX, 4.

3. Medh. on Manu, IX, 94.

4. एतच्च योग्यकाल प्रवर्तनपरं न तु नियमार्यम् । प्रायेणीतावता कालेन गृहीतव्येति चेति  
विमानक्यस्का न कन्या वीर्युनी योग्येति ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 94.

5. आत्मनी हीनक्यसम्

Viśva. on Yāj., III, 52.

कन्या प्रजापतेश्च न्युनामुद्भवैश्च परिणयेत्

Viṣ. on Yāj. III, 53.

6. Yama quoted in S.C.S., p. 216.

7. Śaṅkha, XV, 8.

Parāśara (C.600-900 A.D.) were also in favour of the marriage of a girl who had not attained ~~the~~ sexual maturity.

Yama was so much in favour of the marriage of a very much young girl that he did not hesitate to enjoin that the 'nagnikā' girl should be married <sup>even</sup> to an unsuitable person, ~~if occurs on~~ on the non-availability of a suitable one, <sup>and</sup> but in ~~any~~ <sup>no</sup> case <sup>should</sup> she ~~could not~~ remain unmarried at the age of reaching maturity<sup>1</sup>.

It is in absolute contrast with Manu who advised the father to let the girl remain unmarried throughout her life, if a suitable match was not available for her<sup>2</sup>. Here, it will not be erroneous to presume that in order to be on the safe side the marriage of the girls much before the age of puberty, was recommended by the lawgivers, because in each and every case it was not possible to have the marriages arranged just before the time of the onset of adolescence and the prescribed limit <sup>likely to be</sup> was <sup>As such</sup> crossed. ~~Therefore~~ we notice a tendency of favouring the marriage of a girl at a low age.

According to Brhat Yama, a girl could be given in marriage upto ten years of age and the father who failed to do so, was in his view, contemptible<sup>3</sup>. Vyāsa, who belonged to this period<sup>4</sup>,

1. यथायु मुणावते कन्यां नग्निकां ब्रह्मचारिणी ।

अपि वा मुणाहीनाय नोपहन्म्याद्रक्षस्वलाम् ॥

Yama quoted in S.C.S., p. 216.

2. Manu, IX, 89.

3. Br. Yama, III, 20-21.

4. C.V. Vaidya, History of Medieval Hindu India, ~~Ch.~~ p. 189.

suggested that a girl who wore lower cloth only could be given in marriage.<sup>1</sup> Parāśara was also in favour of pre-puberty marriages.<sup>2</sup> Haradatta recommended the marriage of the girl before the age of puberty, when she felt shy of not wearing clothes.<sup>3</sup>

On the basis of the Arthasastra tradition Somadeva held the view that the age of the girl and the bridegroom should be twelve and sixteen respectively.<sup>4</sup> The account of Alberuni reveals that the society clung to this custom of early marriage in actual practice, as according to him, no Brahmana could let an unmarried girl stay in his home beyond the age of twelve years.<sup>5</sup>

Thus it appears that in actual practice the age of twelve years was the latest age-limit for the girl to be given in marriage, but the marriage even before this age was highly appreciated in the Dharmasastra tradition.

1. अनन्यपूर्विको तपुर्वी शुक्लकसंपुतम् ।

पुताद्योवसनी गौरी विज्यातदशपुरुषम् ॥

Vyasa, II, 3.

2. Parāśara, VII, 6-9.

3. यदा कन्या वासा प्रतिपद्यतेऽथ तत्तदेव प्रदेयेति ।

Hara on C.D.S., 23.

4. द्वादशवर्षी स्त्री षोडशवर्षी

पुमान् प्राप्तव्यवहारी भवता ।

Nitivākyaṃṛtaṃ, 31.1,

Yasastilaka, VI, Sec. 19.

5. Sachau, Vol. II, p. 131.

It appears that the rules of the Smṛtis were enjoined mainly for the Brāhmaṇas. <sup>How far</sup> ~~Whether~~ the custom of child marriage entrapped <sup>the</sup> Kṣatriyas also into its snare, can not be definitely established. The literature of this period affords abundant proof of the fact that ladies of the royal families were fairly grown up at the time of their wedding. According to the testimony of Bāṇa, Rājyasrī was quite grown-up at the time of her marriage<sup>1</sup>. Kādambarī and Mahāśvetā were also grown-up maidens<sup>2</sup>. The heroines of many dramas, kāvyas and kathās were also depicted as young maidens whose love-affairs form <sup>their</sup> the themes. )

( Moreover, the svayamvaras performed in this age<sup>3</sup>, further bear testimony to the prevalence of the marriage of grown-up girls among the royal families. )

That the girls were fairly grown-up <sup>at the time of marriage</sup> is also proved by the sculptures of our period. The marriage scene of Śiva and Pārvatī throws light on it. Here the goddess <sup>has been</sup> ~~was~~ depicted in a fully developed form at the time of her marriage<sup>4</sup>.

1. H.C., Tr. Cowell <sup>a</sup> And Thomas, Ch. IV, p. 130.

2. Kādambarī, p. 324.

3. Supra, pp. ~~64~~-64-6

4. S. Kramrisch <sup>2</sup> Pāla and Sena Sculptures, fig. no. 41, ;

A. Goswami <sup>2</sup> Indian Temple Sculpture, Plate 15, ;

Urmila Agarwal <sup>2</sup> Khajurāho Sculptures <sup>a</sup> And Their Significance, Fig. 31, p. 53.

But, there are some evidences of early marriage also. Between the ninth and eleventh centuries the custom of child marriage was prevalent in the Chandella society.<sup>1</sup> The Visaladeva Raso informs us that the Chahamanā king Visaladeva III was married to a twelve year old girl Rājamati.<sup>2</sup> We find references to child marriage in some stories of the Kathāsaritsāgara.<sup>3</sup> The Prabandhakosā also refers to child widows.<sup>4</sup>

The reasons behind this tendency of marrying a girl at an early age, appear to have been many. At this time the marriage ceremony had come to be regarded as the Upanayana in the case of the girls.<sup>5</sup> The time of Upanayana for the Brāhmaṇa was the eighth year, for the Kṣatriyas the eleventh year, and for the Vaiśyas the twelfth year.<sup>6</sup> So at these ages the boys could be initiated and the girls could be married.

Many sub-castes sprang up in this period<sup>7</sup> and the caste system had become more and more complex. In the later centuries

1. K.C. Mishra, Chandella Aur Unkā Rājatva Kāl, p. 190.

2. V.R. II, 7.

3. O.S., Vol. IX, Ch. CXXIV, pp. 74, 76.

4. P.V. Srinallavadiprabandha, p. 21, Abhadaprabandha, p. 100.

5. Supra, p. 58.

6. Kāna, Dharmasāstra Ka Itihāsa (Hindi), p. 212.

7. G.S. Churye, Caste, Class And Occupation, Ch. IV, p. 99;

C.V. Vaidya, History of Medieval Hindu India, Ch. II, pp. 177-8.

of our period we find that the inter-caste marriages were not so popular.<sup>1</sup> To find a suitable match from amongst a small caste group was difficult, and if the guardian found a suitable match, he at once performed the marriage of his daughter for the delay might result in losing a good match.

The joint family system was also favourable for such a custom. It was not necessary that at the time of his marriage the boy should be an earning member. To look after his wife was the joint responsibility of the family. So, it was needless to wait till the boy became economically independent.

The poor financial condition of a lower class family may also be cited as one of the factors that led to the prevalence of early marriages among the masses. In a large family of many members, the head of the family was generally the only earning member. He wanted to be free of his liabilities as soon as possible. So he deemed it proper to marry the daughter as soon as he found a suitable match. This reason seems to be quite weighty, for it has already been noticed that the unmarried girls of the royal and aristocratic families were fairly grown up.<sup>2</sup> Their parents were in no hurry to get suitable

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1. *Infra*, pp. 85-7.

2. *Supra*, p. 74.

matches for them as they were confident that they would be able to choose from amongst the rich and kingly families of any region. They did not find it difficult to support their daughters who used to live in plenty.

It appears that a tendency of regionalism was also responsible for the early marriages of girls. At this time there was a great risk of life and property due to rise of robbers and thieves.<sup>1</sup> This was the period of political upheavals and there was every possibility of wars at any time, so the long journeys were avoided. The Brhannāradiṭya Purāṇa includes it in the list of prohibited practices in the Kali Age<sup>2</sup>. In the Bhaviṣyattakhaṇḍa of Dhanapāla (11th century A.D.) the mother of Bhaviṣyadatta forbids him to take a long journey as ~~the~~ war might break up any time.<sup>3</sup> So they used to accomplish

1. Br. Nār. Purāṇa, 38, 86;

R.C. Hazra, Studies In The Upa Purāṇas, Vol. I, p. 334;  
Vastupālacarita, p. 100.

2. महप्रस्थान - गमनम्

R.C. Hazra, Studies In The Upa Purāṇas, Vol. I, p. 328.

3. विहि पडिक्लु अरुह पडिसुइ। अत्यह छे करिवि को सुइ।

R. Sāṅkṛtyāyana, Hindi Kāvya Dhārā, p. 266.



all their works within their own region. They tried to marry their daughters with the suitable boys of the same region. If any body got a good match, he at once solemnised the marriage lest others might get him.

It was generally felt that the incoming of Muslims also helped in establishing the custom of marrying girls at an early age.<sup>1</sup> The so-called misbehaviour of Muslims with the Hindu maidens <sup>is said to have</sup> opened the eyes of their parents, and in order to save their girls, they used to give them in marriage as early as possible. However, the Muslims had not acquired any extensive political hold in Northern India before the twelfth century A.D. Moreover, in the Devala Smṛti we find rules for purifying a woman ravished by a Muslim.<sup>2</sup> But it <sup>has also been</sup> ~~was~~ opined that these <sup>1</sup> were later interpolated in the Smṛti when there were frequent invasions of Muslims.<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to point out that

1. A.L. Basham, The Wonder that was India, Ch. V, p. 166;

C.V. Vaidya, History of Medieval Hindu India, Ch. II, p. 188.

2. Devala, 38-59.

3. Kane, History of Dharmasāstra, Vol. I, p. 121.

Alberuni was informed that a man who came into contact<sup>s</sup> with the Muslims could never be admitted into <sup>the</sup> Hindu fold<sup>1</sup>. When there was such a restriction for a man, ~~then~~ it may well be imagined how an orthodox Hindu could think of getting ~~an~~ woman <sup>defiled</sup> (impaired by the connections <sup>with</sup> of the Mlechchhas) back into the society. Thus, it may be said that the methods of purification were being added <sup>to</sup> ~~in~~ the Smṛti during the invasions of Sultan Mahmud, as it was being realised that some ways and means should be devised for the unfortunate women. The orthodox views of a Hindu denying the right of readmission of any ravished person, particularly a woman, into the society, <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ well-known, and <sup>how far</sup> whether the methods of purification were ever followed in actual practice, can not be ascertained.

Another popular conception connected with the evil custom of early marriage, was the admission of unmarried girls in the order of nuns. It has been pointed out that the atmosphere of the Saṅghas was sullied due to the misbehaviour of the monks and in order to prevent their girls from joining the order, the parents used to marry them at an early age<sup>2</sup>. But this argument loses its force when we see that Buddhism was on the decline during the early medieval period (c. 700-1200 A.D.)<sup>3</sup>, and as such the horror of this religion could not have been felt to this extent.

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1. Sachau, Vol. II, p. 163.

2. Supra, p. <sup>53</sup>49;

C.V. Vaidya, History of Medieval Hindu India, ~~Chand~~, p.189.

A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, ~~Chand~~, p. 60.

3. G.C. Pandey, *Buddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Ka Itihāsa*, pp.491-2.

### Qualifications of the Bride and the Groom

Caste and the family were the main considerations in this respect. It was believed that those who cherished the desire of making their family prominent should always have matrimonial alliance with the respectable and noble families. The enumeration of certain families<sup>1</sup> from which the girl would not be taken also establishes the importance of the family background. Families with noble traditions and ideals, and free from any heritable disease, were regarded as ideal for matrimonial relations.

As regards the qualifications of the bride, the Sāṃti writers have given elaborate rules. She should possess good signs. The detail explanation of 'good signs' is also available. A girl whose limbs were perfect and well-built, who had a sweet name, whose disposition was graceful, who had such quantity of hair on the body and the head as did not look ugly, who had small teeth and softness, was deemed to possess good signs.<sup>2</sup> Viśvarūpa, Vijnānesvara, and Aparārka, while commenting on Yajñavalkya (I, 52), mentioned these signs, of course with some additions. They were of the view that the girl should be 'Ananyapūrvikā', i.e. a virgin.<sup>3</sup>

1. Manu, III, 6-7; Yaj., I, 54, Hārita quoted by Aparārka on Yaj., I, 54; Yama quoted in ...K.G., pp. 26-27.

2. Manu, III, 10.

3. अनन्यपूर्विकमिति । अन्येनानुपमुत्तममित्यर्थः ।

Viśva on Yaj., I, 52.

अनन्यपूर्विको दानेनोपमीर्गनं वा पुत्रान्तराभिरपुत्रीतम् ।

Vij. on Yaj., I, 52.

अनन्यपूर्विकम् नैवत्यसौ या पूर्व वता । एतच्च वाग्दत्ता विषयं वेदितव्यं

Aparārka on Yaj., I, 52.

The bride should be 'Savarnā', 'Asapindā' and 'Asagotra'. Savarnā means that she should be of the same varna as that of the groom. Asapindā implies that she should not be Sapindā on the mother's and father's side, and <sup>asagotra means that she</sup> ~~she~~ should not be of the same gotra as that of the groom's father. According to Vijnānesvara, the Sapindā relationship between the two persons is that they both have the same composites of a body, e.g., the son has Sapindā relationship with the father<sup>1</sup>. He had fixed the latest limit of Sapindā relationship in the fifth generation of a mother and in the seventh generation of the father<sup>2</sup>. The seven generations of a person were counted either from the six generations prior to him or from the six generations after the person and he was included in the seventh generation. Likewise beginning from the mother, the five generations prior to her was the latest limit of a Sapindā relationship<sup>3</sup>. It is further recommended that the bride should not be of the same gotra<sup>4</sup>. It is generally believed that 'gotra' denotes a line of ancestors

1. Vij. on Yāj., I, 52.

2. Vij. on Yāj., I, 53.

3. तथा च पित्रादयः षट् सपिण्डाः, पुत्रादयश्च षट्, जात्या च सप्तमः  
सन्तानमिदं पि यतः सन्तानमिदं स्तमादाय गणयेदावत्सप्तम इति सर्वत्र योजनीयम् ।  
तथा च मातृत्वारभ्य तत्पितृपुत्रान्तादिगणनायां पंक्ती पुरुषवर्तिनी मातुतः  
पंक्ती त्युपपद्यते ।

Vij. on Yāj., I, 53.

4. Manu, III, 5; Yāj. I, 53; Sukra, Ch. III, <sup>† 115,</sup> lines 350-51,  
p. 115.

who claim descent in an unbroken line from a common ancestor. Vijnānesvara also held the same views.<sup>1</sup> It may be said that in accordance with this rule the 'Sagotra' marriage was not in vogue in our time as is evident from a story of a Jaina work of the time.<sup>2</sup>

The lawgivers also propounded that the girl should not be brotherless.<sup>3</sup> The brotherless girl was called 'Putrikā' as at the time of her marriage the father used to settle with the groom that his would be son would offer oblation to him (i.e. the maternal grandfather). The result was that the son of his son-in-law used to continue the line of his maternal grandfather instead of his own father. It was in this context that a brotherless girl was avoided in marriage. The girl whose father was unknown, was also considered ineligible for marriage, as there was every chance of her being led astray. Medhatithi was of the view that if the father of the brotherless girl was known, she might be considered suitable for marriage.<sup>4</sup> But Govinda (c. 1060-80 A.D.), another commentator of Manu, held the view that even the girls with brothers, having no father, were

1. मृषेरिकम्पार्थं नाम प्रयत्न इत्यर्थः । गोत्रं वापराध्यासः । अर्पं च गोत्रं च अर्प-  
गोत्रं । समानि अर्पगोत्रे स्य अतो समानार्पगोत्रकमप्यता । समानार्पगोत्रज ।  
न समानार्पगोत्रकताम् ।

Vij. on Yaj., I, 53.

2. K.P., Subhadrakathanakam, p. 97.

3. Manu, III, 11; Yaj., I, 53; Sukra, Ch. III, lines 350-51.

4. Medh. on Manu, III, 11.

rejectable as nobody could prove whether her brothers <sup>were</sup> ~~are~~ real or half ones; and if it was the latter case, the girls could be appointed daughters<sup>1</sup>. Nārāyaṇa and Kullūka who belonged to the twelfth century, ~~had~~ explained the term 'Putrikādharmasāṅkaya', (found in Manu, III, 11), by breaking it into two parts - 'Putrikāsāṅkā' and 'adharmasāṅkā', <sup>it thus implies that</sup> ~~is~~ a brotherless girl might be an appointed daughter and might not be a virgin in the true sense of the term<sup>2</sup>. Viśvarūpa (c. 900 A.D.) <sup>and</sup> Vijnānesvara (c. 1070-1100 A.D.), the commentators of Yājñavalkya, were also of the view that in the selection of a girl priority was to be given to one who had brothers<sup>3</sup>.

Some undesirable girls were enumerated by Manu. These girls, according to him, were considered unfit for marriage<sup>4</sup>. Here the personal defects of the girls are mentioned. We find that Manu's restrictions were too hard. But Medhātithi showed some sympathy towards them. He was of the opinion that a girl should not be rejected merely because she was suffering from certain disease. The rejection should be done only in the case of many diseases or some incurable one. Moreover, in the same way a girl having reddish eyes <sup>was to</sup> ~~should~~ be avoided if the colour was due to some illness<sup>5</sup>. The commentators of Yājñavalkya also

1. Govinda on Manu, III, 11.

2. Nārāyaṇa on Manu, III, 11.

3. प्राकृतो व पुत्रिकारूपानिवृत्त्यर्थम् ।

Viśva on Yāj., I, 53.

पुत्रिकारूपानिवृत्त्यर्थम् ।

Viḥ. on Yāj., I, 53.

4. Manu, III, 8.

5. Medh. on Manu, III, 8.

agreed with Medhātithi in this respect<sup>1</sup>.

Further, it <sup>was</sup> suggested that the names of girls should also be a deciding factor in the marriage. Manu had advised the guardians to avoid those girls whose names were after a constellation, tree or a river<sup>2</sup>. Medhātithi had given some examples of such names as Ādrā, Āmalakī, Gaṅgā, Śabarī, Vindhya, Śukī, Vyālī, Dāsī and Dākīnī<sup>3</sup>. The Agni Purāṇa also gives the qualifications of the girl <sup>as</sup> ~~given~~ given by Manu<sup>4</sup>.

Thus, it may be inferred that very few girls could stand the test of the lawgivers as they demanded much of a girl to be married. It can not be said that those girls who did not <sup>fully</sup> come <sup>up to the mark</sup> ~~under this purview~~ were unfit for marriage. They could <sup>of course</sup> be married, but they could not be considered as ideal girls.

After discussing the virtues which were expected of a marriageable girl, it is proper to say something about the groom's qualifications also. It seems that in the upper strata

# 1. वरोगिणीं कुष्ठादिरोगरहिताम्

Viśva on Yāj., I, 53.

वचिकित्स्नीयव्याप्यनुकुष्ठात् ।

Vij. on Yāj., I, 53.

दीर्घरोगीकुष्ठात्

Apararka on Yāj. I, 53.

2. Manu, III, 9.

3. Medh. on Manu, III, 9.

4. Agni Purāṇa, tr. M.N. Dutt, Ch. CCXLIV, pp. 883-4.



of society the guardians of the girls were in search of a suitable match who was Savarna and had completed the first Āsrama, who was celibate, charitable, intelligent and dear to people.<sup>1</sup> In one of the stories of the Kathākosaprakaraṇa it is stated that the Varakas who want to strongly commend the proposal of the Bṛathin's son enumerated the qualities of the boy.<sup>2</sup> The qualifications of a suitable bridegroom are enumerated in a work of a Gāṇḍavāla period.<sup>3</sup> It is clear that the girls were not merely thrown away as an unbearable burden but were given to suitable persons.

### Inter-Caste Marriage

Inter-caste marriages, though allowed to some extent by the Smṛti writers of our time, were condemnable in their eyes. It seems that they allowed this type of marriage reluctantly in the case of non-availability of the wife of the

1. Manu, III, 4.

Yāj., I, 55.

एतैरेव पूर्वोक्तिगुणैर्मृत्तैर्दोषैश्च वर्जितौ वरो भवति । तस्यायमवरो विशेषः  
सवर्ण उत्कृष्टो वा न हीनवर्णः । श्रोत्रियः स्वयं च श्रुताध्ययनसंपन्नः ।  
इत्याद्ययत्नेन पुंस्त्वे परीक्षितः । युवा न वृद्धः । धीमान् लौकिकवैदिकव्यवहारेषु  
निपुण्यति । जनप्रियः ।

Vij. on Yāj., I, 55.

The same are the views of Apararka and Viśvarūpa.

2. K.P. Subhadrākathānakam, p. 97.

3. सजातीया असगोत्रास्य योग्यास्य गुणिनैः शीर्षिणः ।

माता पित्रोः पंचसप्तशास्त्रान्तरितजन्मने ॥

Ukt 1, 20, p. 22.

same caste. Manu was of the opinion that in the first and the lawful marriage one should marry a girl of one's own caste, but in the second one he might marry the girl of the lower varnas in the serial order<sup>1</sup>.

Commenting on this statement of Manu, Medhātithi propounded that in this second marriage too, a girl of the same caste was preferable<sup>2</sup>. Elsewhere he had indicated that in his age (C.900 A.D.) a Brāhmaṇa could marry Kṣatriya and Vaiśya girls<sup>3</sup>. Though the Savarna marriage was appreciated, yet it was recommended by the lawgivers that ~~all the four castes~~ <sup>any</sup> could enter into matrimonial alliance with <sup>a girl belonging to the varna ~~not~~ below one's own.</sup> ~~their next numbers~~. Thus the Brāhmaṇas could take the girls from the Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra folds, ~~and~~ the Kṣatriyas from the next two folds, and so on<sup>4</sup>. The enumeration of the sons, begotten by the 'anuloma' type of marriage further proves the fact that it was law <sup>ful</sup> ~~abiding~~.

Some of the literary and epigraphic sources reveal that the inter-caste marriages were prevalent <sup>to some extent</sup> in our period. Bāṇa in his Harṣacarita refers to his Pārasava brothers<sup>6</sup> which suggests

1. Manu, III, 12.

2. Medh. on Manu, III, 12.

3. Medh. on Manu, III, 14,

4. Viśva on Yāj., III, 283; Vij. on Yāj., I, 57.

Kullūka on Manu, III, 12.

5. Yāj., I, 91-94;

Viśvarūpa, Vijñāneśvara and Aparārka on Yāj., I, 91-94.

6. H.C., Ch. I, p. 64.

that his father had a Śūdra wife as well. Tipperāh inscription (7th century A.D.) also mentions Pārasava issues<sup>1</sup>. Lokanātha was an issue of mixed caste as is clear from the term 'Karana' used for him in the same epigraph<sup>2</sup>. It is said that Brāhmaṇa Hariśchandra had Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya wives<sup>3</sup>. Rājasekhara - a Brāhmaṇa poet, also married a Kṣatriya chāhamāna lady, Avantisundarī<sup>4</sup>. The Chāhamāna ruler Lakṣmaṇa (10th cen. A.D.) had a Vaisya wife<sup>5</sup>.

The history of Kāśmīra also bears testimony to this fact. King Balāditya of Gonanda dynasty gave his daughter in marriage to an ordinary Kāyastha Durlabhavardhana<sup>6</sup>. The famous lady Diddā, the daughter of a Khassa Chief, was given in marriage to Kṣatriya king Kṣemagupta (C. 950-58 A.D.)<sup>7</sup>. <sup>However,</sup> King Saṅgramarāja (C. 1003-28 A.D.) <sup>is said to have become</sup> ~~became~~ the target of ill-fame by giving away his daughter in marriage to a Brāhmaṇa<sup>8</sup>.

1. Tipperāh Inscription of Lokanātha, E.I. Vol. XV, p. 305.

2. Ibid, p. 305.

3. तनूरी हरिश्चन्द्रेन परिणीता दिजात्मजा ।

द्वितीया दात्रिया मदानहाकुल्युणान्विता ॥

Jodhpur Inscription of the Pratihara Banka, V.7,

J.R.A.S., 1894, pp. 4-5, E.I. Vol. XVIII, p. 96.

4. Karp., Act I, p. 12.

5. P.P.S., Lekhanarāulaprabandha, p. 102. Some, however, think that the Chāhamānas were originally Brāhmaṇas.

6. हेतुं स रुक्तामात्रं कृत्वा जामातरं नृपः ।

अथाश्वघासकायस्थं कौ दुर्लभवर्धनम् ॥

Rāj., III, 489.

7. Ibid, VI, 176.

8. Ibid, VII, 10.

The Kathasaritsāgara also mentions some cases of inter-caste marriages. In one of the stories a father is described as asking his daughter the choice of the bridegroom irrespective of caste.<sup>1</sup>

The Manasollāsa, a work of the twelfth century, gives sanction to the inter-caste marriage for rulers by saying that the chief queen of the king should be of Kṣatriya lineage, but his secondary wives might be of Vaiśya or Śūdra varna.<sup>2</sup>

Ibn-Khurdaḍbā, also records the prevalence of such marriages among the Hindus.<sup>3</sup> Speaking of the earlier period Alberuni remarks that inter-caste marriages were held valid in India, but it was not so in his own time,<sup>4</sup> i.e. the eleventh century. Some of the reasons for the prevalence of inter-caste marriages in earlier times, as suggested by Altekar,<sup>5</sup> were the non-existence of any cultural gap between the twice-born varnas and the flexibility of the varna system. But during the later part of the early medieval period the conditions were considerably changed, and consequently inter-caste marriages began to be viewed with disfavour.<sup>6</sup> However, as noticed above, such marriages appear to have been prevalent to some extent among the ruling aristocracy.

1.

A.S.S., 53, 108.

2. Manasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. XX, vs. 1808-10.

3. Elliot, H.I. Vol. I, p. 16;

Nadvi, Arab Aur Bhārata Ke Sambandha, p. 22.

4. Sachau, Vol. II, Ch. XIX, p. 155.

5. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, Ch. II, p. 77.

6. <sup>Infra</sup> Infra, pp. 86-87.

One can not fail to note that though the boy of higher varṇa could take the wife of a lower varṇa, <sup>according to the Dharmasāstra ideal</sup> yet it was not deemed proper for the higher varṇas to give their girls to the boys of the lower varṇas. The testimonies of Ibn Khurdādba<sup>1</sup> and Alberuni<sup>2</sup> <sup>also clear on this point</sup> are index to this fact. In other words, ~~we may say that~~ the Pratiloma marriages were not allowed. Although there might have been some such marriages too, yet the society was not prepared to sanction them. That such marriages were viewed with disdainful eyes, ~~as~~ is clear from a story of the Jñānapañcamīkathā. It relates that a proposal of the marriage of a royal princess with the son of a Vaiśya merchant was sent to the merchant. On receiving it the merchant said that the matrimonial alliance between a <sup>Rājaputra</sup> king and a Vanika would be considered ridiculous<sup>3</sup>.

#### Savarna Marriages

It is difficult to demarcate the period when the inter-caste marriages had gone out of vogue. It seems that from about the tenth-eleventh centuries the inter-caste marriages were condemned. Many medieval law-digests include it in the list of 'Kalivarjyas'<sup>4</sup>. It is opined by Dr. Altekar that during this period there existed vast differences between <sup>the varṇas and</sup> the castes. The Brāhmanas developed a kind of superiority complex. They increased the number of prayers, daily baths and the vratas and also gave up meat-eating. They felt pride in strictly observing these

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1. Nadvī, Arab Aur Bhārata Ke Sambandha, p. 22.

2. Sachau, Vol. II, Ch. XIX, p. 156.

3. Jñāna., I.

4. Kāṇḍe, Dharmasāstra Kā Itihāsa, Part I (Hindi), p. 278.

austerities. The Ksatriyas and the Vaisyas could not maintain the same standard. In the course of time these differences made wide gulf<sup>o</sup> between them, and as a result they refused to take girls from other castes and thus the marriage between a Brāhmaṇa and a non-Brāhmaṇa became out of vogue<sup>1</sup>. The main reason for it, seems to be the lower status of the progeny of inter-caste marriage, assigned by the Smṛti writers. Śaṅkha was of the view that such an offspring was of the mother's caste<sup>2</sup>. Medhātithi (c. 900 A.D.), and Aparārka (c. 1125-30 A.D.), the commentators of Manu and Yājñavalkya respectively, were also of the same view<sup>3</sup>.

This arrangement must have brought complications in the society, and in order to avoid them people began to stick to the custom of marrying within one's own caste, for in this way it became easy to live in harmony.

The narrative of Hiuen-Tsang suggests that even in the seventh century marriages<sup>generally</sup> took place within one's own caste<sup>4</sup>.

It seems that during the age of the Chandellas, marriages were performed within the caste. King Harṣa (10th c. A.D.) took his wife Kañcukā from his own caste<sup>5</sup>. It is said that king

1. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch. II, pp. 77-8.

2. ब्राह्मणेन दाक्षिणायामुत्पन्नः दाक्षिण एव भवति । दाक्षिणेण वैश्यायां वैश्य एव । वैश्येन कुशायां कुश एव इति ।  
Śaṅkha quoted by Aparārka on Yāj., I, 92.

3. Medh. on Manu, X, 6.  
बनुलीमवास्तु मातुस्मानवर्णत्वात् ---- ।  
Aparārka on Yāj., I, 95.

4. Walters on Yuan Chwang, Vol. I, Ch. V, p. 168.

5. E.I. Vol. I, p. 126.



Yasovarmana married a lady of a noble family<sup>1</sup>. The prevalence of 'Savarna' marriage is also testified by the account of Alberuni<sup>2</sup>. Kalhana's indignant remark on the marriage of the daughter of king Sangramaraja, proves the unpopularity of inter-caste marriages in Kasmira<sup>3</sup>. *But the tradition was; of course continuing to some extent among the ruling aristocracy.*  
Dowry System

After going through the literature of our time, we may say that there was no such system in the Hindu society of this period. In the prehistoric times, it was the bride's father who could claim some money as payment from the groom's father. The history is an index to this<sup>e</sup> fact that<sup>un</sup> like today the bride's father never felt disheartened on account of dowry to be paid to the groom's father.

Of course we find some references<sup>to</sup> of the gifts which were given to the groom, but it was due purely to affection<sup>for</sup> of the girl and not as a compulsory custom. There was no pre-settlement of dowry between the groom's and the bride's parties as none of the Smritis or other works say any thing about it.

It is said in the Harśacarita that on the occasion of the wedding of his daughter Rājyasrī with Maukharī king Grahavarman,

#### 1. महावैश्वसुत्पन्ना

E.I. Vol. I, p. 144.

2. Sachau, Vol. II, Ch. XIX, p. 155.

3. ययौर्त्तं तस्य भीरुत्वं विदन्वत्प्रकाशयताम् ।

उदयनिष्ठं च धैर्यदामि यस्तः पातिम् ॥

Rāj., VII, 10.

4. *Supra*, p. 90



king Prabhākaravardhana gave abundant gifts to them<sup>1</sup>. The Samarāicakaha tells us that the bride was bedecked with costly costumes and ornaments and took them with her to her in-law's home<sup>2</sup>. An inscription of the tenth century provides us with the information that on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter Revaka with the Gaṅga prince Permānandi - Butayya, Rāstrakūṭa king Amoghavarṣa gave the three districts as dowry<sup>3</sup>. In the Karakaṇḍacariu it is stated that on the occasion of the marriage of Rativegā with Prince Karakaṇḍa, the king of Campā gave great dowry consisting of elephants, innumerable horses and the garlands made of jewels<sup>4</sup>. In the Gujrat chronicles we find that generally the gifts of elephants, horses and maid servants were made at the time of ~~the~~ marriage by the bestower of the girl, <sup>which</sup> ~~#~~ <sup>accounts of the</sup> it is quite clear from the marriages of Prince Jugadeva and Prince Rindhuwul<sup>5</sup>.

#### Marriage Customs

The detailed description of marriage customs <sup>does</sup> ~~is~~ not seem necessary for our purpose; however, a vivid description of marriage occurs in the Harṣacarita of Bāṇa (c. 650 A.D.), the Samarāicakaha of Haribhadra Sūri<sup>6</sup> (c. 788-820 A.D.), and the

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1. H.C., Ch. IV, p. 220.

2. Samarāicca, II, pp. 93-101.

3. Hebbala Inscription of A.D. 975; E.I. Vol. IV, pp. 350-1.

4. K.C., Ch. VII, 8.

5. A.K. Forbes, Rāsmālā, Ch. VIII, pp. 122-3.

6. H.C., Ch. IV, pp. 208-209; Samarāicca, II, Upaniti

Upamitibhavaprapaṇcākathā of Siddharṣi (c. 906 A.D.).

In some of the works of our period we find that ~~the~~ girls were taken to kings for the purpose of marriage<sup>1</sup>, but from this we can not conclude that the bride was always taken to the groom's place.

As regards <sup>the</sup> marriage ceremony various religious rites are mentioned in the Dharmaśāstra. Their enumeration and illustration is not necessary, but some of them, such as betrothal, Pāṇigrahaṇa, Saptapadī etc. may be mentioned here.

Betrothal was a rite by the performance of which the marriage was called 'settled'. Both the bride and the groom's parties gave the word to perform the marriage with the same girl and the boy and not with any body else, and the girl was called 'Vāgdatta'.

In Pāṇigrahaṇa, the bridegroom took the hand of the bride which denoted that he took the responsibility of the girl and would ever be with her in life. In the course of marriage ceremony the bride and bridegroom took seven steps around the sacrificial fire which stood witness to their union.

After the marriage ceremony, the couple was required to observe austerity and celibacy for sometime. As the custom of child-marriage was prevalent in our time, a Saṃskāra known as Garbhādhāna was used to be performed when the bride attained maturity<sup>2</sup>.

1. Priya, Act I, p. 7; Ratna, Act I, p. 15; Nāya, I, 17-1;  
V, 2, 13-14.

2. Sachau, Vol. II, Ch. XIX, p. 156.

When the Marriage was <sup>regarded as</sup> called complete?

We find ~~the~~ diversity of views with regard to this knotty point. Manu was of the view that if after betrothal the would be husband died, then the bride could be united with her younger brother-in-law through Niyoga<sup>1</sup> - thus he treated the marriage as complete after the performance of betrothal only. Kullūka also held the same view<sup>2</sup>. Viśvarūpa also took the betrothal as the seal of marriage. He advocated that even in the case of the availability of a better match, the girl should be given only to whom the word had already been given<sup>3</sup>. But Viññānesvara and Aparārka expressed the view that if one got a more suitable match <sup>one</sup> ~~he~~ might go for him<sup>4</sup>.

In the case of the bridegroom it was said that even after betrothal if he came to know of the defects of the bride, such as ~~the~~ hereditary disease, unchastity, or there <sup>might</sup> ~~may~~ be doubt about her virginhood, he might refuse to marry her and the settlement of marriage might be cancelled<sup>5</sup>.

How important was the virginhood of a girl, can be known from the views of Medhātithi. He was of the opinion that, although the seven steps had been taken, yet if one discovered that his wife was not a virgin in the true sense of the term, he might

1. Manu, IX, 69.

2. Kullūka on Manu, IX, 69.

3. Viśva. on Yaj., I, 65.

4. Vij. and Aparārka on Yaj., I, 65.

5. Manu, IX, 72.

abandon her<sup>1</sup>. But Kullūka was of the view that when the seven steps had been taken, no body could rescind the marriage, and, if there was any fault, it should be discovered before the performance of Saptapadī as <sup>it was only before it that</sup> ~~then~~ the marriage could be cancelled<sup>2</sup>.

The earlier view that marriage is complete after Saptapadī<sup>3</sup> continued during our period in a well-settled form. However, Medhātithi was the only <sup>lawgiver</sup> ~~person~~, who <sup>favoured</sup> ~~had propounded~~ the abandonment of a wife (if she was corrupted), even after Saptapadī, as according to him, marriage could be solemnised only with a maiden.

### Divorce

One of the most important factors of a Hindu wedding was its indissolubility. Marriage was a sacred ceremony, having life long importance in a Hindu's life and ordinarily he could never think of getting rid of his wife by way of divorce. The indissolubility of the Hindu marriage is reflected in the stories of Prince Sīmha<sup>4</sup> and Vīradhavalā<sup>5</sup>. In both the cases, although the wife and husband were not on friendly terms, yet they had to live together and to abide by the rules. A husband had to maintain even an unchaste wife<sup>6</sup>, because there was no system of divorce in the ordinary course. In the eleventh century Alberuni also observed that divorce was conspicuous by its absence in the Hindu society. He say that husband and wife could be parted only after death as the <sup>Hindus</sup> ~~Indians~~ did not practice divorce<sup>7</sup>.

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1. Medh. on Manu, IX, 72.

2. Kullūka on Manu, IX, 72.

3. Mbh., Drona Parva, 55.15-16; Kāma, 3, 5, 13.

4. K.P., Sīṃhakumārakathānakam, pp. 47-50.

5. P.C., Tr. Tawney, p. 98.

6. Jñāna, I, 217-18.

7. Sachau, Vol. II, p. 154.

### Chapter III

#### Married Life

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##### Conceptions of the Importance of the Wife

A well-known verse of Manu which gives the wife the same honour as to goddess Lakṣmī, shows the importance of the wife<sup>1</sup>. The same idea is also reflected in the Mahābhārata, where it is said that without wife, a home is not called home, the wife herself is home. And moreover, although there may be sons, grandsons, daughters and daughters-in-law, a home without his wife is no home to a man<sup>2</sup>.

Medhātithi gives reasons for comparing wife with the goddess of wealth. In his view, none can get comfort in the absence of the wife, even though he may have immense wealth. He can not entertain his guests without the help of the wife. Like a poor man, he considers himself helpless and can not think of doing anything without the assistance of the wife. In this way, there is no difference between the goddess of wealth and the wife<sup>3</sup>. Kullūka also agrees with Manu in this respect when he says that for the sake of progeny, a wife must be honoured with

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1. प्रजानां महापाताः पुत्रार्हा गु हृदीप्यतः ।

स्त्रियः क्रियश्च गेहेषु न विहिताः स्तिकाश्च ॥

Manu, IX, 26.

2. Mbh., XII, 144, 6; XII, 4, 4.

3. Medh. on Manu, IX, 26.

clothes and ornaments, like Lakṣmī she adorns the home with her sweet presence<sup>1</sup>.

The wife satisfies the sexual desires of her husband and by participating in the religious rites with him, glorifies his name and frees him from the devaṛṇa. To Kullūka, the wife appears to be a blessing for she is helpful in paying off the "Pitrṛṇa" which a man owes to his ancestors. She does so by producing a <sup>male</sup> child, who <sup>then</sup> makes oblations to his forefathers. In his eyes, the wife by participating in his religious rites does not serve his purpose as much as she does by giving birth to a male child<sup>2</sup>. Thus, in a way, wife opens the door of the way to heaven<sup>3</sup>.

It is only through noble deeds that a man gets his wife from the gods. So she is a most honoured and lovable possession of a man<sup>4</sup>. The greatness of the wife is further proved by the

1. गर्भत्प्राप्त्यर्थं बहुकृत्याणामाजमुता वस्त्रालंकारादिदानेन संमानार्हां स्कुहे  
लोनाकरिष्यः स्त्रियः त्रियश्च गौषु तुल्यरुपा नानयोविशेषो विद्यते ।  
यथा निःश्रीकं गृहं न राजत्येवं निःस्त्रीकमिति ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 26.

2. कर्मायाप्यग्निहोत्रादीनि परिक्र्या उत्कृष्टा रतिः पितृणामात्मनश्चापत्यजना-  
दिना स्वर्ग इत्येतत्सर्वं मायाधीनम् ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 28.

3. दाराः स्वर्गस्य संक्रमः

K.K.G., p. 7.

4. देवैर्दत्ता मायां तां पतिर्लभते न तु स्वेच्छया तां सतीं देवानांप्रियं कुर्वन्  
ग्राह्यान्हादनादिना सदा देवापुत्पन्नामपि पीनयेत् ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 95.



fact that a man had to touch the head of the wife at the time of taking oath<sup>1</sup> in the court.

One who defamed his wife was considered punishable and had to pay a fine of hundred panas in the court of law, and one who cast away his wife had to pay six hundred panas, for the wife was never to be done away with.<sup>2</sup>

### The Relation between Wife and Husband

Even for the sin of his wife, the husband had to suffer the punishment if he tolerated her immoral acts.<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to find that almost every lawgiver had assigned a higher status to the husband in relation to his wife. This was due to the predominance of the patriarchal principle in society. They were unanimous in declaring that the husband was equal to God<sup>4</sup> and that the wife should serve him whole-heartedly, even though

1. पुत्राणां वारणां च पृथक् शिराणि स्वं स्पर्शयेत् ।

Kullūka on Manu, VIII, 114.

Manu, VIII, 275.

2. मातृपितृभ्यामुक्ताः स्वायम्भोवन्मनुष्यनादयश्चरणाद्यर्कं नास्ति ।

- - - परित्यक्तमेव परित्यक्तं राजा भक्षयति दण्ड्यः ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 389.

3. भार्या अस्मिन्नारिणे नारपति सममर्थे मर्त्यैर पार्थ क्षतिवर्धते ।

Kullūka on Manu, VIII, 117.

4. Manu, V, 154; Yāj., 1, 77; Sankha<sup>V, 7,</sup> Matsya Purāṇa 210, 18.

he ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> devoid of good qualities. Even their commentators agreed with this view<sup>1</sup>. Manu eulogised <sup>the</sup> husband, for he ~~gives~~ <sup>gave</sup> pleasure to the wife in both the worlds<sup>2</sup>.

Medhātithi was of the opinion that the wife and husband performed religious rites together, and it was due to the <sup>is</sup> fact that the husband was the giver of happiness in the next world<sup>3</sup>. In Kullūka's view the service of a husband prepares <sup>the</sup> a way to salvation for the wife<sup>4</sup> and thus <sup>gives her</sup> ~~gives~~ happiness in the other world too. We can safely conclude that this tendency had its root deep in the society and was flowering in the ~~later~~ centuries of our period of study. The Prakrit and Sanskrit works of the ~~later~~ period also speak of the <sup>the husband as</sup> ~~so-called~~ devatya <sup>for</sup> ~~of~~

1. सदाचारसूत्र्यः स्मृत्यन्तरोन्नुरक्षी वा विद्यादिगुणाहीनो वा न्यापि साध्या  
स्त्रिया देवत्वतिराक्षीयः यस्माच्च ॥

Kullūka on Manu, V, 154.

दोषवतीऽपि पुरुः स्त्री विर्वर्जनविकल्पमानाभिः कार्यम् ।

एष स्त्रीणां परो धर्मः ॥

ध्यासीऽपि - "धर्मदेवतानार्यः" ।

Viśva. on Yāj., 1, 77.

स्त्रीभिः सदा पुरुर्वर्जं कार्यम् ।

Viś. on Yāj., 1, 77.

2. Manu, V, 153.

3. Medh. on Manu, V, 153.

4. नित्यमिह लोके च सुखस्य दाता तदाराक्षेन स्वर्गादिप्राप्तेः परलोकेऽपि सुखस्य दातेति ।

Kullūka on Manu, V, 153.

<sup>the wife</sup> ~~the husband~~<sup>1</sup>. In the Kuvalayamālākathā <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ princess also expresses <sup>her</sup> innate desire to be accepted as a dāsī by her husband<sup>2</sup>. It was generally said that a wife without a husband had no existence at all. As the river is without water, the night without moon, the lily without sun, so is the wife without husband<sup>3</sup>. In spite of this exalted position of the husband, it was accepted that the husband and the wife were one at heart although two in bodies. <sup>It was believed that,</sup> Having acknowledged the necessity of a female, Prajāpati divided his own body into two halves - male and female and thus the husband and wife originated from the same body. Medhātithi and Kullūka opined that this division of the Prajāpati's body ~~clearly~~ <sup>d</sup> indicates that they <sup>were</sup> ~~are~~ separate only in bodies, but in all other functions they <sup>were</sup> ~~are~~ wholly united<sup>4</sup>.

#### 1. पद्म-सरणा महिलाया

Kuvalaya, line 3, p. 181;

मत्तारदेव्याया नारीया होति

Ibid, line 25, p. 265.

K.P., Śalibhadrakathānakam, line 4, p. 61.

रमणी देवता नार्या लोकानां ब्राह्मणस्थया । इदं युष मनोपारि कुर्यते वर्त्म मुनि ॥  
मत्तारिहं देवता तैः कुरु मत्तिं मत्तारुता । यो कर्त्तुं नम देवी वा कर्त्तव्यस्तेन वत्तया ।

B.K., Srenikakathānakam, vs. 237-38, p. 85.

#### 2. इच्छन्ममं दासिं वा न हि विता मह दियस ।

Kuvalaya, line 19, p. 164.

#### 3. यथा नदी विनाऽम्बोदापामिनो शक्तिं विना ।

अम्बोकिनी विना मानु मर्त्ता कुल्यधुस्तया ॥

P.K., Jivadevasūripṛabandha, p. 7.

#### 4. On Manu, I, 32.

Thus, it was regarded that none of the two <sup>were</sup> are complete in themselves separately, but both complete <sup>d</sup> each other<sup>1</sup>.

This <sup>notion of the</sup> oneness of the husband and wife was viewed as of a permanent nature, <sup>and it promoted</sup> Accordingly, <sup>the</sup> there must be a spirit of co-operation between them, ~~in interests, actions and in whatever work they undertake.~~ The marriage vow also <sup>required</sup> ~~instructs~~ them to be one in times of prosperity as well as ~~in~~ adversity and <sup>to</sup> help each other in attaining full happiness in life. The words of Bhavabhūti elucidate the conjugal love and relation of a husband and a wife. According to him, a wife and a husband are to each other <sup>the</sup> a dearest friend, relatives, all ambitions, riches, and the very life itself<sup>2</sup>. Their true love remains the same both in prosperity and adversity, and in all circumstances and environment, <sup>it</sup> gives delight and comfort to each other's heart.

1. विप्राः प्राहुस्तथा वैतयो मर्ता वा स्मृतांगना ।

Mamu, IX, 45.

नैवः पुरुषो भवति अपि तु मायस्विदेहस्यनोयापत्यानो त्येतत्परिणाम एव पुरुषः । तथा वैतद्विदो विप्रा वदन्ति यो मर्ता तेवा मायस्मृति ।

Kullūka on Mamu, IX, 45.

2. प्रयो विप्रं, कथुता वा समग्रा सर्व कामाः श्वपिजोषितं वा ।

स्त्रीणां मर्ता, कंदारश्च पुंसामित्यन्योन्यं वक्तव्योक्तिमस्तु ॥

M.M., Act VI, v. 18.

and does not diminish with the advancement of age<sup>1</sup>.

To become a faithful and true companion of her lord, was the highest ambition of a woman. The relation between the famous divine couple<sup>1</sup> served as an ideal for her. A wife who had unflinching faith in <sup>her</sup> ~~his~~ lord was compared with Laksmī or Umā or Śachī. Rallādevī, the wife of the minister of king Devapāla of Bengal is compared with Pārvatī and Laksmī<sup>2</sup>. Queen Śrikāñchanā, the wife of king Trailokyacandra, was also likened with the wives of gods<sup>3</sup>. ~~Queen~~ <sup>Queen</sup> Vilāsadevī was also praised in the same way<sup>4</sup>. She was the wife of Vijayasena of the Sena

1. अतिं सुसुतः लोकोत्तमं तवास्ववस्यासु य-

त्रिभानो हृदयस्य यत्र जज्ञा यस्मिन्मन्यसिः ।

कालिदासराज्यात्ययिणो यत्प्रसारी स्थितं

भद्रं तस्य सुमानुषस्य स्वमर्थकं हि तत्प्रार्थयते ॥

U.R. Act I, v. 39.

2. Bādāl Pillar Ins. of the time of Nārāyaṇapāla,

E.I. Vol. II, p. 160.

3. As the moonlight (lady) of the moon Śachī of the conqueror (Indra), Gaurī of Hara and Śrī of Hari, so also was Śrikāñchanā, charming like gold (Kāñchana), the beloved of that (king) whose authority was acknowledged by all.

Rāmapāla Copper Plate of Śrichandra, v.6,

Ins. of Bengal, Vol. III, p. 7.

4. The Chief queen of this lord of earth was Vilāsadevī, shining as the crest jewel of his female apartment, just as the Laksmī was the wife of Viṣṇu and Gaurī of (the god) having the young moon on his crest (i.e. Śiva).

Naiḥatī Copper Plate of Vallālasena, v. 10,

Ins. of Bengal, Vol. III, p. 77.

A queen named  
 dynasty of Bengal. | Sadbhāva also commanded the same honour ~~by~~ <sup>from</sup>  
 the people for her faithfulness to her husband<sup>1</sup>. Likewise in  
 the Gauhati grant queen Durlabhā, the wife of king Purandarapāla  
 of Assam (11th cen. A.D.) is likened to the divine consorts of  
 Lord Viṣṇu, Śiva, Indra, Mādana and Moon-God<sup>2</sup>. From times  
 immemorial there was no dearth of faithful and devoted wives  
 in India. In our period too, as is clear from <sup>evidence noticed</sup> the above ~~lines~~,  
<sup>some</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>and other women</sup> queens <sup>one</sup> did not lag behind in following the ideal conduct  
 of <sup>one</sup> divine couples.

#### Duties and Rights of the Couple

To a wife, the husband was a deity. Therefore the first  
 and foremost duty of a wife was to honour him and obey him  
 completely and to take care of his comforts. ~~etc.~~ It was  
 ordained that throughout their lives the husband and wife should  
 ever be one in their actions and should be chaste to each other  
 till death<sup>3</sup>.

Commenting upon the word 'Āmaranāntika' (Manu, IX, 101),  
 Medhatithi observed that this restriction <sup>ed</sup>ends with the death

1. His wife Sadbhāva by name was a second Bhavānī (wife of  
 Śiva) in appearance; she was as much devoted to her husband  
 as Sītā (herself) and resembled Padmā, the wife of Viṣṇu.  
 Ramaganj Copper Plate of Īśvaraghosa, v.4.  
 Ibid, p. 155.

2. Gauhati grant, v. 14.

3. Manu, IX, 101, 102.

of any one of them<sup>1</sup>, while other commentators propound<sup>ed</sup> that any one who ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> left, ~~should~~ <sup>was to</sup> observe celibacy throughout one's life. It was believed that where there ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> unity between the husband and the wife, Dharma, Artha, and Kāma prospered<sup>2</sup>. The lawgivers unanimously demanded of a wife to be loyal to her husband, to serve him, and to obey him in his life, and, if by ill-luck he dies<sup>d</sup>, to cherish his sacred memory. According to Bhartṛhari (c. 651 A.D.), a woman who always desires<sup>d</sup> the welfare of her husband ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> a true wife<sup>3</sup>. The ideal set forth in the Manu Smṛti held good <sup>for</sup> many centuries after, ~~as~~ <sup>was</sup> is clear from the glosses of Medhātithi and Kullūka<sup>4</sup>. It was recommended that a wife should ever be faithful to her husband in all circumstances. Medhātithi, while commenting a verse of Manu (V. 151), suggested: ~~that~~ 'saṁsthitaṁ cha na langhayet'<sup>st</sup> means that even after his death a wife should not treat herself independent in doing whatever she likes and <sup>should</sup> live in the same way as she lived in his life time<sup>5</sup>.

1. Medh. on Manu, IX, 101.

2. यज्ञानुकूल्यमेकमेव जायापत्योः । त्रिवर्गं पार्ष्णीकामलदाणास्तत्र वृद्धिमुपैति ।  
अन्यथा तु विपर्यय स्यात् ।

Viśva. on Yāj., 1, 74.

यत्र दम्पत्योरानुकूल्यं चित्क्यं तत्र पार्ष्णीकामानां प्रतिदिनमभिवृद्धिः ।

Vij. on Yāj., 1, 74.

पार्ष्णीकामास्त्रिवर्गाः । स दम्पत्योरानुकूल्ये संप्रतिपत्तिं वयति ।

Aprārka on Yāj., 1, 74.

3. यद्गुरुरिव हितमिच्छति तत्कुरु ।

Nitisatakam, 67.

4. On Manu, V, 164-66; IX, 29-30.

5. Medh. on Manu, V, 151.



But Kullūka took <sup>it</sup> ~~the~~ term to mean that she should not give up the performance of religious rites for the peace of the departed soul<sup>1</sup>. Śaṅkha also gave <sup>the</sup> highest place to the service of the husband<sup>2</sup>. Fidelity until her death was <sup>ordained</sup> ~~propounded~~ for the wife and one who came upto the mark was eulogised<sup>3</sup>. Haradatta (c. 1150-1300 A.D.) a commentator of Gautama remarked that a wife should never think of a person other than her own husband<sup>4</sup>. The <sup>qualitative</sup> characteristics of an ideal wife are found in some of the literary works also, <sup>such as</sup> ~~Banodara Gupta~~ in the Kuttanimatam<sup>5</sup> (8th cen. A.D.) ~~enumerates the qualities of a noble wife~~<sup>6</sup>.

The Smritis contain detailed account of the services which were to be rendered to the husband. To Manu and his commentators the service of the husband was equal to the <sup>at</sup> ~~service~~ of Guru.<sup>6</sup>

1. तं जीवन्तं परिशीन्मुतं च नातिश्रेष्ठं । व्यभिचारेण तदीयभ्रातृत्वमङ्गादिविरहितया पारिलौकिकं कृत्य सण्डनेन च ----- मुत्तस्यप्रियं व्यभिचारेणाविहितं भ्रातृसण्डनेन युधि संमेषऽपि ॥

Kullūka on Manu, V, 151, 156.

2. न व्रतैर्न पितृवैरन्यैर्धर्मैर्न विविधैर्न च ।

नारीस्वर्गमाप्नोति प्राप्नोति पतिसुखात् ॥

Śaṅkha, V, 8.

3. मर्तरि जीवति मुते वा या चापत्यादन्यं पुरुषं नैवीषाच्छति तेह लोके विपुलं कीर्तिमाप्नोति । उभया च एव ब्रीहति पुण्यप्रभावात् ।

Vij. on Yāj., I, 75.

4. मर्तरि नातिश्रेष्ठमुत्तुरन्यं मनसाऽपि न चिन्तयिषु ।

Hara. on C.D.S., IX, 2.

5. निर्विणी निर्विणा मुदिते मुदिता समाकुलाकुलिते ।

प्रतिष्ठाप्यमा कान्ता संतुष्टे केवलं मीता ॥

Kutta, V. 440.

6. Manu II, 67; *supra*, p. 11.

It was only through the service of the husband that a woman attained heaven<sup>1</sup>. Her daily routine and household works, as propounded by the lawgivers, also gave priority to the husband's comforts. The detailed account of her duties were given by Manu, Yājñavalkya, Vyāsa, Śaṅkha, Devala, Śukra etc. The substance of their dictums was that a wife should bear a smiling face, should be active, should wake up before her husband, should respect her parents-in-law, should be well-versed in the household affairs, should know to buy, clean and arrange utensils and other things, should know how to prepare a monetary budget and spend accordingly, should look after the comforts of the servants and all the members of the family, should spend free time in spinning, weaving and agriculture, should not be extravagant, and should never speak harsh words. Further she should not go to her parents, to any function, place, fair etc. without the permission of her husband. She should not drink spirituous liquor, should avoid the company of undesirable persons - Ganikas, female ascetics, female astrologers, women who knew Tantricism and who were of bad character. She should not be away from her husband, should not sleep in the day and should not stay in the house of an unknown person.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Manu, V, 155.

मनुस्मृत्यनुसारेण स्त्री स्वर्गलोके पुन्यते ।

Kulluka on Manu, V, 155.

2. Manu, V, 150, IX, 11, 13; Yāj., I, 83, 87; Śaṅkha quoted by Vij. on Yāj., I, 87; S.C.V., pp. 249-50; Śukra, Ch. IV, Sec. IV, 12-42.

It seems that these duties were assigned to the wife after a careful study of the nature of man and woman. Some significance was attached to each of them, e.g. if she bore a cheerful look, the husband would be happy with her, and on the contrary, all charms were lost in any angry look. Medhātithi and Kullūka amplified the ideal set forth in the Manusmṛiti<sup>1</sup> by saying that a wife who was cheerful and radiant with beauty received affection from her husband, and both were satisfied with each other, and did not seek the company of other men and women. This led to a pure and happy family life. On the other hand if she looked ugly and showed annoyance, she herself invited calamity in the house.<sup>2</sup> Even if the husband was averse to her, she was to perform the household jobs with a smiling face.<sup>3</sup> Viṣṇaśvara also laid stress on having a cheerful look.<sup>4</sup>

1. Manu, III, 62.

2. त्रिवर्गं यच्छनादिना कलितमस्या भूमेऽविकल्पतया परं पुत्रप्राप्त्यर्थं विरजितकुलं  
दोषस्तं भवति तदा पुनररीचमानस्या भवति विद्विष्यतया नरान्तरापीकृतिकस्यैव कुलं  
याति न भवति

Kullūka on Manu, III, 62.

3. सर्वदा भर्तारं विस्मरेऽपि प्रसन्नमनसा प्रवर्तते

Kullūka on Manu, V, 150.

4. एवैव प्रवर्तितमना

Viṣ. on Yaj., I, 83.

How far women of our age were able to discharge these duties skilfully, may be inferred from a few examples which are being given here. Dandin gives a true picture of a housewife, who very ably performed all the household duties and became the favourite of the family.<sup>1</sup> She was the wife of Prince Saktikumāra. We also find references to ladies of expert in the culinary art. They used to prepare vegetable, curries and other dishes, which is evident from 'Daker Vachan' and 'Manikchandra-kajārgāna'.<sup>2</sup> A work of the twelfth century says that women had to do most of the house-hold affairs themselves.<sup>3</sup> The history of Europe also reveals to us that in the contemporary feudal society woman occupied a very low position and her

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1. पतिं च देवतमिव मुक्तकथा पर्यसरत् । गृहकार्येषु वदितुमभ्यसितम् ।  
परिवर्तनं दासिभ्यनिधिरात्माश्रितम् । तद्गुणवतोऽप्यत्र भर्तासर्वमेवकुदुम् ।  
सदाप्यसौव कृत्वा देवतमिव विदितोऽरम्भं निर्विघ्नम् ।

D.C., Later part, Uch. VI, p. 357.

2. F.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, p. 57.

3. Uktī, 20, p. 34; 29, p. 49.

sphere of activity was mainly the home. She was required to look after the servants and household affairs. She was expected to know weaving, sowing, spinning etc.<sup>1</sup> According to a German proverb the duties of a woman are summed up in three words - Kirche (Church), Kuche (Kitchen) and Kinder (children)<sup>2</sup>.

As polygamy was prevalent in our time, a man could take more than one wife. There was the possibility of domestic quarrels too between them. So the lawgivers also instructed them as to what should be their conduct in the home. It was said that the eldest wife should try to maintain her position and dignity in the home, should behave tactfully, and should regard the younger wife as her younger sister. If she noticed that the new wife became the favourite of her husband, she should try that equal attention should be paid to each of them. If there were many co-wives, each was to have close contact with the next senior wife. The eldest wife was charged with the duty of maintaining peace in the home. Likewise the youngest wife should regard her eldest co-wife as her mother and should seek her

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1. Ferguson and Burum, A Survey of European Civilisation, p. 267;

Carl Stephenson, Mediaeval History, p. 233.

2. H.M. Das, Manu And His Seven Commentators, p. 183. The Greeks were also of the view that to do household work efficiently was the primary duty of a housewife.

J.J. Meyer, Sexual Life In Ancient Greece, p. 38.

counsel and help in every affair of the household<sup>1</sup>.

What were the duties of a wife whose husband had gone abroad? The lawgivers had given specific rules in this regard too. It was ordained that at the time of his departure, the husband should see that ~~the~~ proper arrangements <sup>were</sup> ~~have been~~ made for the comforts and livelihood of his wife in his long absence, for otherwise she might acquire a wrong course. If, for any reasons, he sets forth without having <sup>made</sup> ~~done~~ any arrangement, the wife <sup>was to</sup> ~~should not be disheartened and in order to live with dignity,~~ ~~should~~ earn her livelihood by doing sewing, knitting, weaving etc. She <sup>was to</sup> ~~should~~ lead a simple, pious life <sup>and to shun all</sup> ~~without using any~~ beauty aids ~~She should have no~~ interest in playing and entertainment, in beautifying her body, in going to participate in functions and fairs, in meeting unknown persons etc. ~~Even~~ <sup>was even to</sup> she ~~should~~ bear a grief-stricken face and ~~should not~~ <sup>to</sup> laugh

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1. Kāma. Part IV, Ch. II, Sūtras - 1 - 26.

2. मृताभ्यादनादि द्यूवा पत्यो देशान्तरं गते देहप्रत्याप्तपरगृहगमनरहिता जीवेतु ।  
अदत्त्वा पुनर्गते गृहकिर्णादिमिरनिन्दितशिल्पेन जीवेतु ।

Kulluka on Manu, IX, 75.

loudly<sup>1</sup>.

These restrictions were necessary for her as they enabled her to lead a pious life, always having the welfare of the husband supermost in her mind.

The nature of all these duties which a wife had to discharge, shows that she had no separate entity apart from her husband. Her each and every action was for the welfare of the husband and his family. Rājasekhara beautifully described the role of a house-wife in the household \*; she should be free and frank to her husband, full of reverence to his sisters and brothers, faithful to his mother, loving to his relations, sympathetic towards the servants, soft and smiling to her

1. देशान्तरगतर्तनां श्रोतां कन्दुकादिभिः शरीरसंस्कारानुष्ठानादिभिः समाजीजनसमुहः उत्तमो विवाहादेः ज्योतिर्न । हास्यं विष्णुमयं परगृह्यमानं त्यजेत् ।

Vij. on Yāj., I, 84.

श्रोता वृतादिभिर्या, शरीरसंस्कारः स्नानानुष्ठानादिः । समाजीजनमेव । उत्सवः कामदीप्रभृतिः । ज्योतिर्न । हास्यं परगृह्यमानमेतत्सर्वं प्रवर्तितं पतिरित्यजेत् ।

Śaṅkha quoted by Aparārka on Yāj., I, 84.

प्रसाताण्डवविहारविप्रदस्तांगरागोपानयानविदुष्यन्तीत्पुष्टपानपीजनकन्दुकीहनगन्ध-

मात्यालंकारदन्तधावनांजादशप्रसाकानाम स्वतंत्राणां प्रीणितकर्तृकाणां

कुलस्त्रीणामनारम्भः ।

Aparārka on Yāj., I, 84.

विकर्मादीन्वदनादहसंस्कारवर्जिता ।

पतिवृत्ता निराकारा प्रीणिते प्रीणिते पती ।

See also Vyāsa, II, 52.



co-wives, courteous to her husband's friends and indifferent to his enemies.<sup>1</sup>

The wife had a dignified position in the home and she enjoyed many rights too. She had the right of participating<sup>2</sup> in the religious rites with her husband, and this privilege helped in maintaining her social status to a considerable extent. Manu also had allowed this privilege to her but she could not recite the sacred mantras. But Medhātithi held that the pronouncement of the names of the deities was not prohibited; only the ending 'avahā' was to be replaced by 'namah'.<sup>3</sup> Other commentators like Govinda, Nārāyaṇa and Kullūka recommended that she was to remember deities in mind only and not to speak their names audibly.<sup>4</sup> At any rate the wife was not allowed to perform

1. निर्व्याजा दक्षिते कर्तव्यं नता स्वयमु भवता मव ।  
 इत्येता ईशुवताता परिक्रमे स्मेरा सप्तत्वेभ्यः ॥  
 परं तु मित्रजने सन्ध्यावचना हिन्ना न तद्वदेभ्यु ।  
 स्वेना सवर्नं नतनु तविदं वेदोभ्यमर्चु ॥

Bālarāmāyana, IV, v. 44.

2. On A.D.S., II, 6-13, 17-19, Asva G.S., 1-8, 5-6.

In the Vedic age, we find that the wife always took part in religious activities and sacrifices. Apastamba and Asva-layana also gave this right to the wife. The fire which was lighted at marriage was worshipped by both of them. Haradatta a commentator of 12th century also held the same view.

3. Medh. on Manu, III, 121.

4. इन्द्राय नम इति प्रथमस्तुतं मानसं तु देवतादेवता न निषिध्यते ।  
 Kullūka on Manu, III, 121.

religious acts independently, without the permission of her husband, and if she did so, no Brāhmaṇa would attend the feast given at that time.<sup>1</sup>

The first and foremost duty of the wife was to serve her husband faithfully and this could be possible only when she was with him. Therefore, it was her right to reside in his house and get maintenance from him. The wife was considered to be a gift to the man, presented by God, so his duty was to support a dutiful and devoted wife,

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1. Medh. on Manu, IV, 205.

This view can be illustrated from the mode of performing various rites in which the husband and wife both had to co-operate. In the Śraद्धa ceremony after the feast of the Brāhmaṇas, guests and the servants, the couple were required to take the food together.

even when she was ~~quarrelsome~~ quarrelsome, boastful and sharp-tongued<sup>1</sup>. A wife could not be abandoned unless her crime of causing loss of caste was proved. There was a law of punishment for the husband who cast off an innocent wife<sup>2</sup>.

Even an out-caste wife was allowed to have bare maintenance and residential place. According to Medhātithi, a husband could cease to have intercourse with her and could take away the right of performing household work, but <sup>he</sup> could not forfeit her right to get food and maintenance from him<sup>3</sup>. Vijñāneśvara and Aparārka had also similar lenient views <sup>about</sup> towards a corrupted wife<sup>4</sup>.

1. Medh. on Manu, IX, 95.

तां सतीं देवानां श्रिं कुर्वन् ग्रायाञ्जनादिना सदा देवायुत्पन्नामपि पोषयेत् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 95.

2. Manu, VIII, 389; Yāj., I, 76.

3. Medh. on Manu, VIII, 389, XI, 176.

4. हुताधिकारां मृत्युपरणायिकाधिकाररहिताम् । मलिनाः प्रजापत्यंजनशुक्लवस्त्रा-  
परणयन्याम् । पिष्टमात्रोपजीविनीं प्राणयान्ना मात्रोपजीव्याम् ।  
मृत्युशायिनीं स्वविभुस्यैव वासयेत् ।

Vij. on Yāj., I, 70.

त्यागस्वीयभोगस्यकार्ययोः न तु निष्कासनं गृहात्स्याः ।

Vij. on Yāj., I, 72.

पति च धर्मं न निस्तेरक्यां मलिनीशरीरवस्त्रां देहधारणसमर्थान्मात्रोपजीविनीं वजातां  
पिताशायिनीं च हुत्वा व्यभिचारिणां गृहेन्द्रे वासयेत् ।

Aparārka on Yāj., I, 70.

संयोगसंस्पर्शमागच्छासहाधिकारविषयस्तथागः कार्यः,

न पुनर्गृहान्निर्वासितरुचः ।

Aparārka on Yāj., I, 72.

Vijñāneśvara laid down that <sup>the</sup> barest maintenance <sup>was to</sup> should be given to an outcaste woman just to maintain her body anyhow<sup>1</sup>. ~~then~~ He enumerates <sup>a</sup> the <sup>kind of</sup> women who deserved these punishments<sup>2</sup>. But this barest minimum <sup>could</sup> ~~should~~ not be allowed to those corrupted women who were unwilling to undergo penances<sup>3</sup>.

From the above ~~account~~ it may be inferred that even a corrupted wife had the right of getting maintenance from her husband, and one could not abandon his wife on <sup>e</sup> this charge of corruption; and after undergoing penances a wife could enjoy all her rights as before. This attitude of the lawgivers shows the leniency towards the fair~~/sex~~.

The wife had the right to get maintenance from her husband even when he was in <sup>some</sup> other country. It was necessary to preserve the sanctity of their relation, otherwise for want of these

1. य एव पुरुषाणां परित्यागे पिण्डोदकदानविधिः कृतप्रायश्चित्तानां पण्डितविधिश्च स एव पतितानां स्त्रीणामपि वेदितव्यं ।  
क्यास्तु विशेषः । पतिताभ्यां पि ताम्यः स्त्रीभ्य कृतीदकादिकर्मिणां वासस्तृणाण्यम्यं कुटीगृहं प्रधानगृहस्तनोपेयम् । तथाप्राणभरणमाक्रमं मर्त्तिं च वस्त्रं पुनः पुरुषान्तरौपनीगनिवारणसहितं दयम् ।

Vij. on Yāj., III, 287.

2. होनवर्णमनं नर्मपातनमग्राह्यता अपि मर्तुः अग्राह्यस्यापि हिनमित्येतानि स्त्रीणामसाधारणानि पत्ननिमित्तानि ।

Vij. on Yāj., III, 298.

3. "पतस्तु परित्यागाः शिष्या गुरुणा च या । पतिपुत्री च विशेषेण पुंनितीकता च या ।" तासां प्रायश्चित्तविहीनान्तीनां मध्ये चपुसणामेव शिष्यादीनां वेतान्गृहवासादिजोक्तहेतुत्वापुच्छेन त्यागं कुर्यात् ।

Vij. on Yāj., III, 298.

comforts she might choose a wrong path.<sup>1</sup> Medhātithi has pointed out that if a husband went without arranging for her food etc., then being unable to bear the pang of starvation, she might commit any crime to get food and might even go to another man.<sup>2</sup> These illustrations may be understood fully in the light of the adage - 'bubhuksitah kim na karoti papam'. Kullūka, a later commentator of Manu, also held the same view.<sup>3</sup>

One of the rights of the wife was to get protection from her husband. A great emphasis was laid on the protection, as it was deemed to help in preserving the purity of the progeny, noble conduct, family and Dharma.<sup>4</sup> Having the fickle nature of women in view, it was laid down that they should be guarded against an evil, even if it may be of little significance. A little slackness in keeping a watchful eye on her might bring ruin to the family.<sup>5</sup> This duty was to be carried out by the husbands of all castes, even if they were

1. Supra, p. 106.

2. Medh. on Manu, IX, 74.

3. यत्प्रदुग्धायाऽप्यपोऽस्तं तदेवैवत्यपि पुरुषान्तरापर्यं भवेत् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 74.

4. Medh. and Kullūka on Manu, IX, 7-9.

5. वस्तुवेद्योऽपि दुःप्रियोदीः शैत्यार्थपादकेयो विप्रियः शयने सज्जितः  
विपुनर्मह्यः । यत्प्रदुग्धायाऽप्यपोऽस्तं तदेवैवत्यपि पुरुषान्तरापर्यं भवेत् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 5.

handicapped<sup>1</sup> but no force was to be exercised in guarding a wife. The significance of faithfulness and chastity was to be impressed upon her by illustrating the examples of Satī Sāvitrī, Damayantī, Anusūyā etc.; the consequences of vice and virtue were also to be made known to her.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, she was to be so engaged in the household affairs that she should find no time to think of the things other than her own family.<sup>3</sup> According to the Matsya Purāṇa,<sup>4</sup> the husband had the right to correct his wife by beating on her back. This was to be done only by a rope or a slender bamboo stick.

Śaṅkha also prescribed the beating as well as the caressing of the wife. Their timely utilisation was deemed to be necessary to make her a perfect woman i.e. Lakṣmī of the household.<sup>5</sup> Medhātithi and Kullūka seem to be more humane towards an erroneous wife. They suggested that the injunction of Manu (IX, 299-300) did not import the meaning that she should be actually

1. सर्वेषां ब्राह्मणादिकर्त्तृणां भार्यासमावृत्तानां चैव कथमनन्तरं सर्वकर्मणि

उत्कृष्टं जानन्ती ऽ न्यायमावृत्तीषु भार्या रक्षितुं यतेरनु ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 6.

2. पुष्पेणैव स्यात् कथं रक्षिता भवति या पुंशोऽततया नान्यथा रक्षिता ।

अतो धर्माधिकास्तस्मै न रक्षिता भवति नान्यथा रक्षिता ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 12.

3. धनस्य संग्रहणे विनियोगे च कथं रक्षिता भवति या पुंशोऽततया नान्यथा रक्षिता ।

युद्धेन कथं रक्षिता भवति नान्यथा रक्षिता ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 11.

4. Matsya Purāṇa, 227, 152-54.

5. तातनीया स्यात् भार्या तद्धनीया तर्हीव च ।

तातनीया तद्धनीया चैव लोकीयमिति नान्यथा ॥

Śaṅkha, IV, 16.

beaten, but only showed a way to deviate her from the wrong path.<sup>1</sup> The dictum of Manu 'bhartā rakṣati yauvane', it seems, was accepted by the women also who themselves appear to have thought that the father, the husband and the son were to give them protection in childhood, youth and old age respectively.<sup>2</sup> The Dharmaśāstra rules must have been followed to a considerable extent in actual practice. In the sculpture of Khajurāho also we find a few scenes in which the husbands appear to be depicted as protecting their wives by holding a kind of weapon in their hands.<sup>3</sup>

### Chaste Wives

As has already been noticed, chastity was considered the highest virtue of a wife. Praises have been showered upon

1. On Manu, IX, 299.

2. जनमे भर्ता पुत्रः स्त्रीममेतल्लये रक्षतिमित्यु ।

मुक्ता सर्वरीतिः कं सारथं संश्रयति पुष्पमिहिनः ॥

Padma Purāṇa, Part III, parva 78, v. 91.

होई कुमारीर पियान्नी तह जेह्मन्नी भतारी ।

धरतन्नी पुतोन्नीय अन्नहा पुई मोहता ॥

Kuvalaya., p. 76, lines 8-9.

3. U. Agarwal, Khajurāho Sculptures And Their Significance

Fig. 86, p. 118.



chaste wives<sup>1</sup>. From times immemorial India was the store-house of faithful wives, who by virtue of their chastity glorified their name in the history and are still the 'ideal' of Hindu wives. That the Indian wives of our time too, cherished the ideal of chastity, is revealed through the literature, which may be taken to reflect the society in which it was produced. As regards the historical evidence, we may quote the names of various queens who were faithful to their lords. Queen Līlāvati, the virtuous wife of Paramāra king Bhoja, was a chaste woman. When on an occasion the king became suspicious of her chastity, she could not bear it and tried to end her life<sup>2</sup>. With a determined declaration, she underwent through ordeals and proved to be a spotless and pure woman of the harem<sup>3</sup>. Queen Myenul Deves, the wife of Solanki king Karna (c. 1065-93 A.D.) <sup>is said to have been</sup> was a chaste wife. Seeing that the king was indifferent to her,

1. पुथिव्यां यानि तीर्थानि सतीपादेषु तान्यपि ।

तेजश्च सर्वदेवानां मुनीनां च सतीषु वै ॥

सतीनां पादरक्षा सप्तःपुता कुन्वरा ।

Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa vs. 35, 119, 127.

मन्दार प्रवारव्यमालाग्निदीपकहंति । सतीनां परिपुत्याश्च स्नायिष्यादिकाश्रुक् ॥

विद्याविनाशनायान्ति तत्स्या विर्वाविषदाकः । पुरास्वप्नप्रमादितोरस्त्रीबल्लाघिमः

पद्मावतीनिमित्तं प्रसिद्धो मञ्जुवनः । समासकः सुतारायां विद्योरशनिघोषकः ॥

Uttarapurāṇa, parva 68, vs. 342-44.

2. निःशङ्क देव, त्वं यदि मां सतीमसतो वा कृत्वा गमिष्यसि तत्पुण्यं सर्वथा परित्यजे हति ।

B.P., p. 185.

3. जाग्रति स्वप्नकाले च पुण्यं यति यदि मे पति ।

मीन एव परं मान्यो मणिके पापिलोऽस्तु नु ॥

Ibid., v. 49, p. 185.

she was ready to end her life<sup>1</sup>. The wife of Prince Jagadeva was also a virtuous lady for whom her husband was all in all. It is said that when the prince was about to go out in search of service, she pleaded to go with him with the argument that the shadow never separates from the body<sup>2</sup>. It reminds one of Sītā following Rāma to the forest. Kalhana in his Rājatarāṅginī records the various instances of queens who were faithful to their husbands and became satis after the death of their lords. Queen Sūryamatī, the wife of king Anantadeva<sup>3</sup> (C.1028-63 A.D.), and Sahajā, the queen of king Utkarṣa<sup>4</sup> (11th cen. A.D.), were some of them. Sītā, Draupadī and Damayantī continued to be figured as <sup>the</sup> ideal chaste ladies in the literature of this period<sup>5</sup>. Queen Vāsavadattā, a legendary figure, could sacrifice anything for the welfare of her husband, and the sacrifice she made was an unique one<sup>6</sup>. The Daśakumāracarita (8th cen. A.D.)

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1. A.K. Forbes, Rāsamālā, Ch. VII, p. 108.

2. Ibid, Ch. VIII, p. 129.

3. Rāj., VII, 477-8.

4. Ibid, VII, 859.

5. Padma Purāṇa, Part II, parva 46, v. 84; Uttara Purāṇa, parva 68, vs. 220-4; U.R., Act I, v. 13; Act III, p. 102; Āś.Ch., Act V, p. 173; Act VII, vs. 16-18; K.M., Act I, p.34; Act VI, pp. 189-93, 196; Bālabhārata, Act II, v. 41; Act IV, v. 50; V.S., Act I, p. 24; Nalavilāsa, Act VI, p. 75; Act VII, pp. 80-82, 88.

6. Ratnā, Act I, p. 46; Act III, p. 149; V., Act I, v. 10; O.S., Vol. II, Ch. XVI, p. 30.

also refers to many chaste wives<sup>1</sup>. Sulochana, the wife of Jayakumāra was also a chaste and faithful wife<sup>2</sup>. The Ehoja Prabandha (10th cen. A.D.) narrates an interesting incident which tells us about the devotedness and chastity of an ordinary woman<sup>3</sup>. The Kathāsarit-sāgara of Somadeva (11th cen. A.D.) refers frequently to chaste wives<sup>4</sup>. A Brāhmaṇa lady mentioned in a document of the Lekhapaddhati appears to be a chaste woman. She could not bear a <sup>fair</sup> ~~wrong~~ statement about her ~~immoral~~ behaviour<sup>5</sup>. Hemacandra (c. 1089-1173 A.D.) tells us that Priyadarsana, the wife of Sāgaracandra, was also a chaste lady<sup>6</sup>. Many instances of chaste women are found in the Prabandha Kosā of Rājasekharasūri<sup>7</sup> (14th cen.).

These instances, it may be added, represent the idea that chastity continued to be the highest ideal of a Hindu wife.

#### Unchaste wives

But, it can not be taken to understand that there were only chaste women for we have reasons to believe that there were unchaste wives also. The Rājatarāṅginī reveals that in Kashmir

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1. D.C., earlier part, Uch. I, p. 18, later part, Uch. VI, p. 358.

2. Uttara Purāṇa, parva 47, vs. 268-9.

3. B.P., p. 395.

4. O.S., Vol. I, Ch. III, pp. 19; Ch. IV, p. 36; Ch. XIII, p. 161; Vol. II, Ch. XV, p. 9.

5. L.P., Document no. 15, p. 15.

6. T.S.P., Vol. I, p. 91.

7. P.K., Harsakaviprabandha, p. 57, Sātavāhanaprabandha, p. 71, Vikramādityaprabandha, p. 81.

moral laxity became a marked feature in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and even kings and queens were involved in shameful acts to satisfy their sexual desires. King Kalasa (c. 1063-89 A.D.) even did not hesitate to molest his own daughter-in-law. Sulabhā became his prey and being satisfied by her father-in-law that corrupt woman even tried to murder her own husband (Harsa)<sup>1</sup>. Jayamatī was another fickle woman who was the 'kept' of Mandalesvara Ananda and after his murder went to Uccala and showed great affection to him. The king made her his chief queen<sup>2</sup>. The widowed queen of king Harsadeva was also an unchaste wife<sup>3</sup>.

Sūhava, the queen of Gāhādavāla king Jayacandra (c. 1170-94 A.D.) in order to make her son the heir-apparent of the throne, caused the defeat of her husband at the hands of Turko-Afghans<sup>4</sup> and finally drowned him in the river.

A perusal of the literature shows that there was moral laxity in the high society. There were such ladies of loose character who were the cause of miserable domestic life. The Padma Purāṇa says that Lalitā was one of such ladies. She was the queen of the king of Mathura, but did not behave like a royal lady. She had a Brāhmaṇa paramour and thus she was not

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1. ताम्रकुसुमसुखाद्यप्यप्युत्पत्तिः ।

कुसुमसुखाद्यप्यप्युत्पत्तिः ॥

Rāj. VII, 685.

2. Ibid, VII, 1460-62.

3. Ibid, VIII, 272-3.

4. P.C., Tr. Tawney, p. 154, Briggs, Farishta, p. 169.

loyal to her husband<sup>1</sup>. It is stated in the Dasakumāracarita that queen Kalpasundarī<sup>2</sup>, the wife of king Vikatavarmā, was also a characterless lady. She won the heart of her husband by sweet words and ~~came~~<sup>then, went</sup> to Upahāravarmā and prayed ~~him~~<sup>to</sup> to take her as his wife. Dhūmini was another crooked and wicked woman. She was the wife of Dhanyaka who was faithful to her. But his wife threw him in ~~the~~<sup>to</sup> well through connivance and went to woo ~~the~~<sup>to</sup> limped man<sup>3</sup>. In the Bhoja Prabandha we find a story of an unchaste Brāhmaṇa wife<sup>4</sup>. In the Śringāramañjarikathā it is said that Mūladeva's wife was also not a chaste woman; she used to meet a merchant Dattaka secretly. Likewise the king's chief queen too had love-affair with the king's driver.<sup>5</sup> ~~It was most shameful on the part of the queen who ought to furnish an ideal for the women and not to indulge in disdainful activities.~~ A Jaina work also refers to this type of shameful behaviour of a queen who had illegal connection with Minṭha, the king's keeper of elephants<sup>6</sup>. The same book also gives a detailed description of how a prince used to reach the apartment of the princess. She was definitely a lady of loose character<sup>7</sup>.

1. Padmapurāṇa, Part III, parva 91, p. 171.

2. D.C., later part, Uch. III, pp. 246-7.

3. Ibid, later part, Uch VI, pp. 343-5.

4. B.P., p. 402.

5. Ś.M.K., XIII, p. 90.

6. जव निहयं निरिक्ख ता पेक्ख मत्तवारणत्तमि । तंममिं मत्तवारणभागील्यं  
मिंठपरिकलियं ॥

खणीरे उप्पारे हत्थी मिंठेण बीड्ढी संती । उहुं काउण करं उपास  
रायवरपणी ॥

Ā.M.K., p. 190.

In a work of Jinesvara Sūri there is a reference to Sunderī. She was the wife of Jasavardhana, but eloped with Prince Gosali.<sup>1</sup> But according to Jainism, there was no question of good and bad in it, although from the worldly point of view it might be a bad act. Marutunga also refers to a wife, who after the death of her sister went to the house of her brother-in-law and used to live there as the latter's wife.<sup>2</sup> These stories and legends may not be taken seriously. However, it appears that polygamy and the practice of maintaining large harems were considerably responsible for moral lapses.

#### Supersession or Sdhivodana

It is painful to note that in some particular circumstances a wife could be superseded by another one. This act of the husband was justified by the Smṛti-writers - they paved the way for the husbands who could take another wife even on some paltry ground. It was ordained that a wife who was not of good conduct, was diseased, gave birth only to daughters, or was barren, or harsh tongued and extravagant could be superseded by another wife.<sup>4</sup> These

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1. K.P., Sīṃhakumārakathānaka, p. 48.

2. P.C., Tr. Tawney, p. 154.

3. P.K., Vahkashūla Prabandha, p. 77.

4. Manu, IX, 30-31; Yāj., I, 73.

of Manu and Yājñavalkya were upheld by their commentators<sup>1</sup>.

Later on we find some relaxation, as it is said that a barren wife could be superseded in the eighth year, one who <sup>bore</sup> bears dead children in the tenth year and one who <sup>gives</sup> gives birth to female children only, in the eleventh year; but a sharp-tongued wife could be forsaken at once<sup>2</sup>. The main thing behind this rule seems to <sup>be</sup> the desire <sup>for</sup> of having a male child for the propagation of the family, which is very natural. Sufficient time was at the disposal of the husband before arriving at any decision of supersession. Different durations were fixed to actually wait and see whether the wife was really defective or not. That a harsh-tongued wife could be superseded at once shows that sweet temperament <sup>is</sup> very necessary for a happy married life. ~~But it is a lame argument and a wife could not have been superseded on a mere charge of being quarrelsome or sharp-tongued.~~ Medhātithi was also of the same view. He says that such

1. निशिक्षमपानरता असाध्वानारा मृतुः प्रतिकृतावरणशोला कुष्ठादि-  
व्याधियुक्ता मृत्यादिताडनशोला सततमतिव्ययकारिणी या माया  
मवेत्साधिविध्या तस्या सत्यामन्यो विवाहः कार्यः ।  
Kullūka on Manu, IX, 80.

व्याधिता असाधिवकुष्ठादिरोगग्रस्ता । दूर्ध्वा वंनशोला । कथ्या प्रसिदा ।  
अर्धशब्दस्तु र्मकाम्योरपि ग्राहकः पुरुषार्थकुनीत्यर्थः । अग्रियं वदा स्त्री प्रभु  
कैवलस्त्री प्रजननी । पुरुषादिनिष्णी रतिपरांमुली । अविद्वन्मुपरिपरिणयनम् ।  
Visva. on Yāj., 1, 73.

मुरां पिक्तीति मुरापी । दीर्घरोगग्रस्ता । दूर्ध्वा विस्वादिनी । कथ्या निष्कला  
अर्धकुनी अर्धशोला । अग्रियं वदा निष्ठुरमाणिणी । स्त्री प्रभुः स्त्रीजननी ।  
पुरुषादिनिष्णी सर्वजाहितकारिणी अविद्वद्वेति ।  
Vij. on Yāj., 1, 73.

2. Manu, IX, 81.



a wife should be forgiven<sup>1</sup>. Kullūka quoting Āpastamba, opined that only that wife who was harsh-tongued and bore no son, should get this punishment<sup>2</sup>.

It was further laid down that even a sick wife, who was of noble conduct and was faithful to her lord, could not be insulted and superseded without her consent. This concession was granted to her as a reward of her virtuous conduct. According to Madhātithi, this dictum should be applied in each of the above mentioned cases as it follows immediately after the verse which illustrates the categories of the forsakable wives<sup>3</sup>. Sarvajñanārāyaṇa (c. 1150-1250 A.D.), a commentator of Manu, suggested that when she was reluctant to grant her permission, she might be superseded against her will. It appears that to acquire her permission was only a formality, and the husband was free to have second wife, if the first one possessed any of the objectionable defects. But when at the time of supersession, she displayed anger towards her husband and left his house, then she <sup>was to be</sup> ~~should have been~~ forcibly confined or cast away or sent to her parents<sup>4</sup>. When her temper cooled down, she might live in her husband's house<sup>5</sup>.

1. On Manu, IX, 81.

2. अश्रिवादिनी उपर्य यमुप्रा भवति । पुत्रवत्यां तु तस्यां कर्मप्रज्ञासंपन्ने  
पारि नान्यां कुर्वीतान्यतरापार्ये तु कुर्वीतित्यापस्तम्बनिर्णीयादधिकेदं न  
कार्यम् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 81.

3. On Manu, IX, 82.

4. Manu, IX, 83.

5. Kullūka on Manu, IX, 83.

Polygamy

Polygamy was widely prevalent among the royalty and aristocracy. It depended upon the status of the persons as the rulers and other rich men could afford to have more than one wife, while the poor were unable to afford even one. Although the main reason behind this practice was the desire for having a son to continue the family line, if a man's first wife was barren, yet later on rulers and well-to-do men made it a means of enjoyment. We find many examples of kings maintaining large harems.

This custom of polygamy was deep-rooted even in very ancient times. Yājñavalkya, a famous philosopher in the Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad is stated to have had two wives. It is well-known that king Daśaratha and king Pāṇḍu were polygamous. For the kings and feudal lords it was a matter of status and dignity to have many wives.<sup>1</sup> The weight of evidence points to the greater prevalence of polygamy during the period of our study.

King Sundar Verman of the Maukharī dynasty is said to have possessed more than one wife. The Kanakudī Mahotsava informs us that after the death of the king, all of them committed suicide.<sup>2</sup> The Rājataranginī of Kalhana is also full of such references which prove the prevalence of polygamy among the royalty. King Lalitāditya of Kaśmīra had many queens.<sup>3</sup> Diddā and Chandrelakhā

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1. R. Sāhityāyana, Hindi Kavya Dhara, Int., p. 15.

2. A.B.O.R.I., 1930, p. 53.

3. Rāj. IV, 207, 213.

were the wives of king Kṣemagupta<sup>1</sup>. King Uccala (1101-11 A.D.) contracted a second marriage with Vijjalā, the daughter of the king of Vartula. Queen Jayamatī was his first wife<sup>2</sup>. ~~King~~ Mallārjuna had married the daughters of Padmaratha and Nāgapāla<sup>3</sup>.

The Rajaput kings also practised polygamy. There were many branches and sub-branches of the Rajputs, and in order to establish its superiority each clan wanted to have the girl of the other. The <sup>seraglio</sup> ~~seraglio~~ of the kings were full of numerous queens, each conspiring to wield more influence on the king or to get her son declared heir-apparent. How woeful was the condition of the wives of a polygamous but chakravartī ruler can be judged by a bitter experience of one such wife who preferred to be the wife of a monogamist ploughman rather than ~~to have~~ <sup>having</sup> a ruler as her husband<sup>4</sup>.

1. दुर्गाणां लोहरादीनां शास्ता क्षेमसीपमः । नृपतिः सिंहराजास्तस्मै स्वां तनयां ददौ ॥ ~~कुन्दलामिनां कन्यां राजे दत्तवताऽभवत् । फल्गुणाक्षरपतिना----- ॥~~  
Ibid., VI, 176, 179.
2. अथ वर्तुलमूर्तुरात्मजा विष्णुलामिना । कृतपाणिग्रहस्यागादवात्लभ्यंक्षुण्डामुजः ॥  
Ibid., VIII, 287.
3. उदुम्बान्सीमलालां तां फल्गुना कन्यकां । उप्येधेयतायासी नागापालात्मजामपि ॥  
Ibid., VIII, 1975.
4. तिष्ठं मासाण नवाश्याण मत्र सत्य पाशिया लोह । तस्य य सोक्तं तुष्कं  
नलतानुयनायत्री विरलं ॥ वरि हलिकी वि हु मठा जनन्मर्मण्णी गुणीहिं रलिकी वि ।  
मा सगुणीकुम्भणी जह राया चकत्वट्टी वि ॥ वरि गण्धम्मि पिलोणा वरि जाया  
कंत्त पुष्परिलोणा । मा सववठा मल्लिरुविण्ण जम्मवि जम्म वि ॥ जह वि हु  
मठा सोरखी लोह कल्लि सुव्वकण्णु । तह वि हु ताण मणीतुं जहाणी पीवपरिहावी  
संकर-हरि-व्माणं गउरी-उब्धी जैव व्माणी । तह जह पण्णी इट्ठा ती मल्लिरा  
हवरहा डेली ॥ पावेण समधिकणी इट्ठा वासु-नणंममारिया । पम्मेण य निक्कंटी  
परवासी लोह मल्लिराणां ॥ पण्णा ता मल्लिरावी जाण न जोरह की विरवीज्जाई  
वासु (सु) नणंदु सबधी सुगुरी बिट्ठी य दियरी य ॥  
Jñāna, I, vs. 38-44.

The Gurjara Pratihāra kings Haris<sup>and</sup>chandra, Mahendra and Pala I had two wives<sup>1</sup> each. The Hebbala Inscription (975 A.D.) refers to the two wives of Butayya.<sup>2</sup> The Chandella king Madanavarmana had three queens.<sup>3</sup> The word 'Sapatni' used in an inscription of the eleventh century further gives weight to the notion that polygamy was prevalent in high society.<sup>4</sup> The favourite minister Ananta of the king Kirtivarmana is also said to have had two wives.<sup>5</sup> The Chedi ruler Gāṅgeyadeva had as many as hundred wives.<sup>6</sup> King Madanapala, the father of Gahadavāla ruler Govindacandra had two wives, while his son married five princesses.<sup>7</sup> The Chaulukya ruler, King Karna Karna also had more than one wife. Mayanalladevi was his first wife and he also married Karna Sundari.<sup>8</sup> His another wife was Devi. King Jayadeva Udayaditya of Dhara also possessed two wives - one \_\_\_\_\_

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1. E.I., Vol. XVIII, p. 95.

E.I., Vol. XIV, p. 176.

2. E.I., Vol. IV, p. 361.

3. Bharata Kala Bhawan Copper Plates V.S. 1192.

E.I., Vol. XXXI, cf. S.K. Mitra, Early Rulers of Khajuraho, p. 175.

4. Khajuraho Rock Ins. V. 59.

5. Man Record, E.I., Vol. I, v. 34, p. 200.

6. सार्धं शतेन गृहिणी

E.I., Vol. II, p. 4.

7. E.I., Vol. IX, p. 324.

8. Karna Sundari of Bilhana, p. 52.

Solankī and the other Baghela princess<sup>1</sup>. Gaṅgādhara, the minister of Ratnadeva, also had two wives, <sup>whose</sup> ~~their~~ names are given as Rammā and Padmā in an inscription<sup>2</sup>. The Chāhamāna ruler Rājyapāla had two wives<sup>3</sup>. There were more than two wives of king Arṇorāja of <sup>the</sup> Chāhamāna dynasty<sup>4</sup>. <sup>pieces of evidence</sup> ~~these references~~ are an index to the fact that ~~the~~ polygamy was widely practised in our period ~~among the ruling aristocracy~~.

Many references of polygamy <sup>in that class</sup> are found in the Padma Purāṇa of Ravisena<sup>5</sup>, ~~and~~ the Uttara Purāṇa of Guṇabhadra<sup>6</sup>, Upamitibhava-prapañcākathā of Siddharṣi Sūri<sup>7</sup> (c. 906 A.D.), Nāyakumāracarīu

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1. E.I., Vol. XXII, p. 56; A.K. Forbes, Rāsmāla, Ch. VIII, p. 118.

2. Kharod Inscription of Ratnadeva III,

E.I., Vol. XXI, p. 164; E.I., Vol. XI, p. 61

3. E.I., Vol. XI, p. 61.

4. P.V., canto VI, 31, 34.

5. Padma Purāṇa, Part II, parva 28, vs. 160-1, 260, 313;  
parva 33, v. 269; Part III, vs. 21, 46.

6. Uttara Purāṇa, parva 46, vs. 10, 21; parva 47, vs. 169-70, 175-6, 194; parva 54, v. 140; parva 60, vs. 50-1; parva 61, vs. 90-1, 340, 365-6, 413-4; parva 63, vs. 143-4; parva 65, v. 177; parva 67, v. 142.

7. Upamitī, III, pp. 218, 361-4; IV, 609;  
VI, 875; VIII, 1155.

of Puṣpadanta<sup>1</sup> (10th cen. A.D.), Viddhaśālabhañjikā of Rājasekhara<sup>2</sup> (10th cen. A.D.), Parakapḍacariu of Muni Kanakāmara<sup>3</sup> (c. 1065 A.D.), and the Kathāsaritsāgara of Somadeva<sup>4</sup> (11th cen. A.D.).

### Polyandry

The story of princess Draupadī and her five husbands was an interesting topic of common talk among the masses. Since the Epic age we do not find any reference to polyandry either in history or in literature. But surprisingly enough such a reference occurs in a Jaina work of the tenth century A.D. It says that Kovida and Bālisa were married to Śrutī<sup>5</sup>. This instance, though a solitary one may indicate that polyandry was not altogether conspicuous by its absence in the period under survey. It may have ~~been~~ prevailed to some extent in the backward hilly regions of Northern India *also*.

### The Mother

"God could not be everywhere and therefore he made mothers"- this Jewish proverb represents the general feeling of the people through the ages. Indeed mother is a most venerable woman of the world. The word 'mother' symbolises all that is sweet, good,

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1. Nāya, I, vs. 14-18; III, v. 7; V, v. 10; VI, v. 11; VII, v. 15; VIII, vs. 6-8, 16; IX, vs. 1-2.

2. Viddha., Act IV, pp. 94, 114, 116.

3. K.C., Ch. VI, 16, p. 61; Ch. VII, 7, pp. 65, 69.

4. O.S., Vol. VI, Ch. LXVIII, p. 21; Ch. LXXIII, p. 129; Ch. LXXIV p. 142; Vol. VII, Ch. CIII, p. 181; Vol. IX, Ch. CXX, p. 24; Ch. CXXII, pp. 34, 48; Ch. CXXIII, pp. 61, 63, 66.

5. Upamiti, VII, 1049-50.

lovely and respectable<sup>1</sup>. In every civilisation a high position was assigned to her. A good deal has been said in her honour and praise. All the Smṛtis speak of her as <sup>the</sup> greatest object of reverence. It is said that no other 'guru' can surpass the mother<sup>2</sup>.

The fact that during the Bhikṣāṭana ceremony the son had to beg alms from a mother first of all, proves her greatness<sup>3</sup>. Another factor that adds<sup>ed</sup> to her greatness was the view that an 'Āchārya' is <sup>more</sup> greater than ~~the~~ ten teachers and a father ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> greater than hundred Āchāryas, but a mother <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ more honourable than a thousand fathers<sup>4</sup>. Medhātithi takes it to mean that in the presence of <sup>the</sup> ~~above~~ mentioned persons one should pay respects to the mother first of all<sup>5</sup>.

1. The sweetest sounds to mortals given <sup>a</sup> Are heard in Mother, Home and Heaven,

- W.G. Brown - Mother, Home And Heaven

2. नास्ति मातुः परी गुरुः ।

Atri, 151.

The Mahābhārata also establishes the greatness of the mother.

It says that she is even greater than the mother earth<sup>3</sup>; the consequences of all other curses may be averted, but not that of a mother.

माता गुरुतरा पुनः ।

Vanaparva, 313.60

सर्वेनामेव शापानां प्रतिपाती हि विपत्तेः । न तु माताभित्तानां मोहाः क्वचन विपत्तेः ।

Adiparva, 37.4.

3. Mamu, II, 50.

4. Mamu, II, 145.

5. अस्मिन् च पुन विवर्षिते समवाये एतेनां माता प्रथमं वन्द्याः ततः पिता तप  
ब्राह्मणस्तत उपाज्यायः ।



It is further laid down that towards the father's sister, mother's sister and one's own elder sister one should behave as towards one's own mother, but among all these the mother is the most respectable. It is explained in this way: if there is any confusion between the orders of the mother and those of her sister and the rest, a man should abide by the order of his mother<sup>1</sup>. One should not try to win the favour of others by disregarding his own mother<sup>2</sup>.

A mother should never be disregarded as she is the image of earth<sup>3</sup>. Like the earth she bears the burden of her children<sup>4</sup>. The parents happily endure all kinds of trouble in bringing up the children, their debt is so great that it can not be repaid even in hundred births. The mother has to undergo greater pain at the cost of her own life in a child-birth and afterwards in bringing him up she does not care for her own miseries<sup>5</sup>. A son

1. यदा माताज्ञं ददाति तदा मातुराज्ञा श्रियते न तासां ।

Medh. on Manu, II, 133.

माता ताभ्यां गरीयसीति तेन पितृष्वन्नानुज्ञायां दद्यायां मात्रा च विरोधे  
मातुराज्ञा अनुष्ठेयति ।

Kullūka on Manu, II, 133.

2. तावामुष्कारे श्रियमाणी यदि मातुरनिष्टं स्यात् तदा न कार्यम् ।

Nārāyaṇa on Manu, II, 133.

3. Manu, II, 225-26.

4. इयं पृथिवी सैव माता भारसहत्त्वमभ्यात्

Medh. on Manu, II, 226.

माता च भारणात्पृथिवीपुतिः ।

Kullūka on Manu, II, 226.

5. मातुः क्लेशः गर्भधारणं प्राणहरः स्त्रीणां जातस्य च संवर्णयोगः क्लेशः ।

Medh. on Manu, II, 227.

मातुस्तावत् कुतश्च भारणादुःखं प्रसववेदनातिशयो जातस्य रक्षाणवर्धनकष्टं च पितुरपि-  
काम्येव रक्षासंबन्धीदुःखं उपपन्नात्प्रभृतिविद्वान्भ्यापनादिक्लेशातिशय इति सर्वसिद्धं  
तस्मात् ॥

Kullūka on Manu, II, 227.

should always respect her and no meritorious deed should be performed by him without her consent<sup>1</sup>.

According to Kullūka, mother, father and Āchārya - these three represent the three worlds - 'Bhū, Bhuvah, Svah', three 'Āsramas', three 'Vedas' and the three 'Agnis', the mother is said to be the Dakṣiṇāgni. Though the selfless service to these three, a householder wins the three so-called worlds and like gods gains glory in the heaven<sup>2</sup>. The faithful service to the mother enables one to enjoy fully this world, one who honours her gets the reward of his duties and one who does not do so can not enjoy the fruits of his deeds<sup>3</sup>. During <sup>the</sup> life-time of mother, father and Acharya a person should always act according to their wishes, having their welfare and honour foremost in his mind, and whatever he does with their permission, he should dedicate it to them in word, thought or deed<sup>4</sup>. By paying respects

1. मातापित्राचार्याणां परिकर्या सर्वं तपोमयं इत एव सर्वतपःफलप्राप्तयेन्यमपि  
धर्मं कथं चित्करोति तदप्येतदध्यानुमतिव्यतिरेकेण न कुर्यात् ।

Kullūka on Manu, II, 229.

2. एतेषु त्रिषु प्रसादमकुर्वन्प्रपचारी तावज्जन्मस्यैव गृहस्थोऽपि श्रीलोकान्निव्रजति ।  
--- त्रिष्वपि धर्मं प्राप्नोति । तथा स्ववपुषा प्रकान्मानः कुर्यादिदेववदिति  
दृष्टो भवति ।

Kullūka on Manu, II, 232.

3. यस्यैते त्रयो मातृपित्राचार्य । ब्रह्मताः सत्कृतास्तस्य सर्वे धर्माः फलदा भवन्ति ।  
यस्यैते त्रयोऽनादृतास्तस्य सर्वाणि श्रीतस्मार्तकर्माणि निष्कलानि भवन्ति ।

Kullūka on Manu, II, 234.

4. तेषां श्रुत्याया ब्रवीरीक्ष्य तदनुज्ञातो यन्मन्त्रोक्तकर्माणि परलोकफलं कार्त्तुमिच्छति  
तन्मन्त्रानुष्ठानमिति पश्चादेष्वो निवेदयेत् ।

Kullūka on Manu, II, 236.

to them and by rendering selfless service to them, a man does all what is expected of him. This is <sup>the</sup> highest and most sacred duty of a man and all other acts are but subordinate ones<sup>1</sup>. Yājñavalkya and his commentators also give a rank to the mother higher than that of the Guru or the preceptor<sup>2</sup>.

If a quarrel takes place between the father and the mother, what should be the role of their son? The advice of Sankhalikhita is worth mentioning in this connection. They say that the son should not take the favour of either of them, but if he likes, he should speak in favour of his mother. He owes a debt to his mother who bears him in the womb and undergoes hardships in rearing him up. He can never repay this debt<sup>3</sup>. A son can never abandon his mother until she becomes an outcaste, and if for any

1. यस्मादेतेषु त्रिषु श्रुतिषु सर्वं श्रौतस्मार्तं कर्तव्यं संपूर्णं नुष्ठितं भवति ।

तत्कलावाप्तेस्तस्मादेव स्पष्टो धर्मः साक्षात्सर्वगुरुभार्यसात्मः ।

Kullūka on Manu, II, 237.

2. माता तु सर्वस्य गरीयसीति ।

Viśva. on Yāj., 1,35.

एते च गुर्वाचार्याप्याध्यायात्सर्वज्ञो यथापूर्वं यथाक्रमेण भान्याः पूज्याः । एभ्यः

सर्वस्य मातश्च गरीयसी पूज्यतः ।

Vij. on Yāj., 1,35.

एभ्यो गुर्वादिभ्योऽत्यर्थं गौरवं मातृवाहेतीत्यर्थः । गौतमस्तु मातुराचार्यस्य गौरवमाह

‘आचार्यः श्रेष्ठो गुरुणां मातृत्विकः’ ।

Aparārka on Yāj., 1,35.

3. न मातापित्रोरन्तरं गच्छेत्पुत्रः । कार्यं मातुरित्यनुयायात्सा हि वारिणी पीवणी

च । न पुत्रः प्रतिसुख्येताम्यत्र सौभाग्यायामाज्जीन्नुवाचमातुः ।

reasons/ he does so, the king should fine him six hundred panas<sup>1</sup>. Medhātithi<sup>is</sup> was of the view that even an outcaste mother should be respected and treated with affection by the son, as for him she is an object of veneration for ever and does not become an outcaste<sup>2</sup>. If a son neglects his mother for any reason, he is punishable. The punishment should be given to that son too who disregards his mother and does not fulfil his duties of serving her selflessly in a proper way<sup>3</sup>. One who abandons his mother without sufficient, reasonable causes/ should be considered outcaste and should not be invited at a funeral repast, as such a rite in which he attends in person bears no fruit<sup>4</sup>. On the expiry of his father, it is the foremost duty of a son to give protection to his mother. One who fails to do so is reprehensible<sup>5</sup>.

Further it is propounded that after the demise of their father, the sons must live under the guardianship of their mother

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1. Manu, VIII, 389.

2. न माता पुत्रं प्रति पतति ।

Medh. on Manu, VIII, 389.

3. न मातेति । त्यागमपीच्छणानुप्राणायकरणात्मकं नास्ति ।

Kullūka on Manu, VIII, 389.

4. पातुः पितुर्गुणानां च परित्यागकारणं किं त्यक्ता ----- यदुहव्यं पुत्रं  
तद्वशांसि भुंक्ते । निष्कृतं तद्वशांसि भवतीत्यर्थः ।

Kullūka on Manu, III, 157, 170.

5. पत्यो मृते मातरस्य पुत्री निष्पः स्यात् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 4.

and should not try to have partition during her life-time<sup>1</sup>.

~~Mother is so great and respectable that~~ <sup>the son</sup> one should never hurt her sentiments, even if in doing so <sup>he</sup> one has to suffer <sup>one's own</sup> cause<sup>2</sup>. He should never act against her wishes<sup>3</sup>. A man should never indulge in quarrel with his mother and by doing so he conquers the whole world<sup>4</sup>. "The person who defames<sup>d</sup> his mother, was liable to a fine of one hundred panas<sup>5</sup>. Even one who creates<sup>d</sup> differences between a mother and her son, was also liable to the same punishment<sup>6</sup>."

("The greatness of the mother is further proved by the <sup>fact</sup> statement that after carrying her dead body to the place of cremation, a student <sup>does</sup> not need to undergo purificatory rites but in the case of others he has<sup>d</sup> to purify his body.

1. यस्मात्ते पुत्रा जीवन्ती पित्रीस्तदोयञ्चै स्वामिनी न भवन्ति मातुरपि प्रकृतत्वात्पैतुकमित्यनेन मातृकस्यापि ग्रहणम् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 104.

2. Manu, II, 225.

3. पीहितेनापि ऋषो नाक्नाननीयाः

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 225.

4. Kullūka on Manu, IV, 180, 183.

5. मात्रादीनपातकादिनाऽपित्राप्सु ---- दण्ड्यः ।

Kullūka on Manu, VIII, 275.

6. ब्राह्मणं धनधियुक्ता मातृपुत्रपित्रादीनां परस्परमेवकर्तव्यं दण्डविधिरिति ।

Medh. on Manu, VIII, 275.

The Dharmasastra clearly reveals that mother commanded greatest respect in the family, who bestowed her blessings, and imparted her affection and good-will to all. She was considered as the best preceptor of her children and, as such, had a great hand in moulding their life and character. King Jayasīṃha, Siddharāja of Gujrat, who was a great ruler, gratefully admitted that it was due to his mother that he gained this glory and lamented that she was no more to see her son's name and fame.<sup>1</sup> In one of the Prabandhas of the Prabandhakosa a son is stated to have declared respectfully that it was due to the blessings of his mother that he got success in his life.<sup>2</sup>

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1. मा स्म सीमन्तानी कपि जयेत् सुतमीदृशम् ।

बृहद्वाक्यार्त्तं यस्य मृतममुरन्तरम् ॥

P.K. Vastupalaprabandha, v. 55, p. 115.

2. मातुरसिद्धिं विष्णुं कुरिता य ।

Ibid, p. 118.

## Chapter IV

### The Widow



Chapter IVThe Widow

The position of the ill-fated Hindu widow had become more pitiable than ever before. She was considered most inauspicious<sup>1</sup> and her presence was avoided on auspicious occasions, especially wedding. This humiliation must have had great effect on her mental as well as physical condition, as she considered her life meaningless without her lord.

Life of Celibacy and Strict Vows

Almost all the lawgivers prescribed a life of strict restraint and austerity for her. It was ordained that she should remain chaste, undergo various fasts and should lead a life of celibacy prescribed for an ascetic<sup>2</sup>. By following this path even a childless widow was deemed to attain heaven. After the death of her husband, only fruits and roots <sup>were to</sup> ~~should~~ be her food. <sup>It was enjoined that</sup> ~~In this way~~ she should avoid spicy and rich food and thus weaken her body. Parāśara (c. 600-900 A.D.) was also of the same view<sup>3</sup>. Medhātithi (c. 900 A.D.) laid great stress on chastity and remarked that as long as she remained chaste ~~to her husband~~, she <sup>had right to her husband's</sup> ~~could acquire his~~ property, but if otherwise, she not only forfeited this right but was also banished<sup>4</sup>. Sullūka was also of the opinion that a widow should live on fruits and roots, should not take meat, ~~and~~ honey etc., and should lead a pious life without thinking of any person other

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1. Skanda Purāṇa, IV, 1.4.71, 78, 101-4.

2. Ibid., III, 75.1.

3. Parāśara, IV, 31.

4. Medh. on Manu, V, 157.

than her own <sup>dead</sup> husband<sup>1</sup>. The Skanda Purāṇa prescribed that she should not beautify her body with scents, cosmetics, and ornaments, should take bath frequently, should let lose her hairs, should wear white clothes, should take simple food, should pass her time in worshipping gods and religious offerings, should observe various fasts and should lie on a mat<sup>2</sup>.

These rules were followed in actual life. Bāṇa has stated that the widows did not arrange their hairs beautifully and did not use powder or other cosmetics<sup>3</sup>. The early Bengali literature also reveals the pitiable condition of widows. Any kind of recreation <sup>or</sup> ~~and~~ amusement was denied to them and they <sup>were</sup> ~~socially~~ boycotted. But sometimes out of affection, their parents allowed them to use Fāg (red powder), gold-bracelets and Pātsādī in place of shell-bracelets and Khuam<sup>4</sup>.

In spite of all these disabilities, women as widows had a silver lining in their dark lives - they enjoyed ample proprietary rights as we shall see later on<sup>5</sup>. Here, it is worth while to note that the right of inheritance of the widows as propounded in the Dayabhāga school may be said to have been

1. पुष्पमूलकैः पवित्रैश्च देहं दाप्यते । उत्पत्तिर्य एतिर्णां पुत्राति । न  
च वर्तते पुत्रे व्यभिचारिण्या परपुरुषस्य नामाप्युच्चारिते ।  
दामायायुक्ता नियमवती रक्तकुङ्कुमाणां यो र्जः प्रदुष्टतः तमिच्छन्ती मयुषांसि  
मयुषवर्जोत्पन्नं ब्रह्मर्ष्यशालिनी मरणार्थ्यन्तं तिष्ठेत् ।

Kullūka on Manu, 157-8.

2. Skanda Purāṇa, Kāśikhaṇḍa, IV, 71-106; also Śukra, Tr. Basu, Ch. IV, Sec. IV, lines 57-9.

3. H.C., Ch. VIII, pp. 388-9.

4. T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengali Society, Ch. I, pp. 4-5.

5. Infra, Ch. VII, pp. 271-2

partly responsible for the prevalence of the Satī custom. The widow had the same right in the joint family property as her husband. In these circumstances the yearning for property <sup>may be</sup> made the other members of the family to induce upon the widow to become Satī by awakening in her the devotion and chastity for the deceased husband<sup>1</sup>. Sometimes a king supported <sup>some</sup> ~~the~~ sonless widows of his kingdom. It is evident from a story of the Kathāsaritsāgara where it is related that after the death of a Brāhmaṇa Sughoṣa, the king assigned the fourth part of the latter's salary for the livelihood of his sonless widow<sup>2</sup>.

### Tonsure

Neither the Vedas, nor the early champions of Law, such as Manu and Yājñavelkye, mention this peculiar custom of tonsuring the hairs of the widow. The lawgivers laid down that the widows should not decorate their hair with stylish hair-dos. It proves that their hairs <sup>was</sup> were not cut. We have reasons to believe that at least <sup>the</sup> Kṣatriya widows had hairs on their heads. Bāṇa informs us that the widows used to collect their hairs in a peculiar type of braid or venī<sup>3</sup>.

Moreover, an inscription of c. 900 A.D. also reveals that the widows' hairs were not tonsured, only they did not oil them<sup>4</sup>.

1. Bāṇa, History of Dharmasāstra, Vol. II, Part I, p. 635.

2. O.S., Vol. VI, p. 119.

3. वध्यासु वैधव्यवेणीं वसमुच्यता ।

H.C., Ch. V., p. 254.

4. सरहितपुत्राण्यालः

Pehoa Prasasti of Mahendrapala

E.I. Vol. I, p. 246.

As such, we can safely say that down to the ninth century there was no such custom.

A doubtful reference to tonsure occurs in Veda Vyāsa Smṛti<sup>1</sup> which, according to Dr. Altekar, is a later Smṛti<sup>1</sup>. According to it, if a widow chooses to live she should part with her hairs (tyaktakeśā)<sup>2</sup> and should undergo fasts which should make her body lean and thin. But the word 'tyaktakeśā', does not necessarily mean that her hair should be cut. Besides, it may also mean that she should not beautifully arrange her hair and should leave them as they are. But it is clearly said in the Skanda Purāṇa (9th to 13th cen. A.D.) that the braid of hairs of a widow is the cause of the bondage of her husband in the other world, so she should always get her hairs cut off<sup>3</sup>. Besides these references, no other references to tonsure are found in the Dharmasāstra works. Alberuni, while describing the position of the widow, never speaks of their tonsure. So it was unknown to him, and was not in vogue in Northern India in the eleventh century.

1. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, Ch. V, p. 160. However, Kāṇe puts it between 200-500 A.D., Dharma Sāstra Kā Itihāsa (Hindi), Vol. I, p. 63.

2. जीवन्ती वैद्यकतेशा तपसा शोभायिष्युः ।

Vyāsa, II, 53. Kāṇe was of the view that if the lawgiver wanted to recommend tonsure, he could put it as 'Jīvantī ced vapet keśān +apasa' History of Dharmasāstra, Vol. II, Pt. I, p. 590.

3. विष्वाकर्षी कथी मूर्ति कथाय जायते ।

शिरसो वर्णं तस्मात्कार्यं विष्वा सदा ॥

Skanda Purāṇa, Kāśīkhaṇḍa, IV, 1.4.74.

It seems that in Southern India, it arose after tenth-eleventh centuries.<sup>1</sup> The Jaina and Buddhist monks used to get their hairs shaved. This gave an impetus to those who advocated that the widows should also get their hairs cut-off. The thesis behind this was that it would make them ugly, and thus nobody would be attracted towards them and they would be able to save their chastity.

Some reasonable people, however, were totally against this custom. The Śrīvaiṣṇavas propounded that a maiden or a widow who got her hairs shaved, would get terrible hell after her death, and would be a Chāṇḍālī in the next birth.<sup>2</sup> But it appears that this stern warning could not be much effective, as this useless custom got its hold in Southern India among the Vaiṣṇavas too.<sup>3</sup> Even today some widows with clean shaven heads may be seen here and there.

### Levirate

The meaning of Levirate or 'niyoga' is the appointment of a wife or a widow to procreate a son from intercourse with an

1. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation,

Ch. V, p. 161.

2. कवरीमणि या नारी कुलस्य समाचरेत् ।

कथा वा विधवा वापि रौरवं नरकाग्रेत् ॥

(Sambhu Saṁhita)

मतीहीना तु या नारी पुंड्रयित्वा समाचरेत् ।

वीतसमस्तानि कालि चण्डाली योन्मिषान्मुपात् ॥

(Manu Saṁhita)

जीवति तु मतीहीनाया वीतलीना वसुधरे ।

यत्कवरीरपतं हि प्रकृतं वैश्वदेवम् ॥

(Hayagrīva Saṁhita)

I.A. Vol. III, pp. 136-7.

3. Cf. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, p. 161.

appointed male. There is a difference of opinion as to when and why this practice originated. But this much is certain that the desire for having a son who could continue the family line and could repay 'pitṛṛṇa' was a factor in its origin. There was no economic reason behind it as it was ordained by the lawgivers that one who had his own naturally begotten son (surasā) should not have 'Kshetraja' or 'Dattaka' son, and, moreover, no one could get many sons through appointment. If this custom was economically backed then one could try to procure many sons.

A critical perusal of the statement of Manu on niyoga reveals that he was not in favour of this custom. While dwelling on the procedure of niyoga he simply referred to the views of ancient sages.<sup>1</sup> This view is further supported by the fact that he did not permit niyoga for the twice-born.<sup>2</sup> His commentators too supported his stand.<sup>3</sup> That Medhatithi was definitely against this custom may be viewed from the fact that he considered the daughter so born undesirable for marriage and regarded her as unlawfully born.<sup>4</sup> His interpretation of the term 'elders' who according to him, were eligible to give permission for niyoga also indirectly hints at his

1. R.M. Das, Women in Manu and His Seven Commentators, p. 229.

2. Manu, IX, 64.

3. Medh. on Manu, IV, 176; IX, 64; Kullūka on Manu, IX, 64.

4. निषीतो विहितं तत उत्पत्त्या नास्ति पूर्वोक्तविधौ निषेधः । अतः पुण्ड्र

निषेधते अवेद्यते । ततो नियोगेनैव ज्ञातो न विवाह्यः ।

Medh. on Manu, III, 5.

reluctance to accord permission to such a custom. These 'elders' were the mother-in-law, father-in-law, the younger brother-in-law, and other members of her husband's family and not her own parents and other relations.<sup>1</sup> It may be argued that the permission was not likely to be obtained if the son of the husband's brother was present.<sup>2</sup> Kullūka was also not in favour of niyoga. While commenting on the verses of Manusmṛiti (IX, 59, 62) he seems to have referred to the general practice as propounded by the ancient sages. Like Medhātithi he was also of the view that while indulging in niyoga, the widow should take the permission of the members of her husband's family,<sup>3</sup> and added that when the purpose of having a son was solved, the appointed person and the widow or wife with whom the intercourse took place were required to live and behave like father-in-law and daughter-in-law.<sup>4</sup> King Yana is said to have been the propagator of this reprehensible custom and in his reign the confusion of castes took place due to corruption and lust. So, from that time the learned men prohibited this custom and those who were in favour of it, were surely guided by lust.<sup>5</sup> Quoting Bṛhaspati and Govindarāja Kullūka also remarked that in the earlier age the niyoga was permitted because the men were more learned and full of 'teja', but they have lost these qualifications in the Kali age, so this

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1. गुरुवर्य स्वसुपुत्रदेवराजः ससुपुत्रः इत्यप्या न विप्रसक्तः ।

महाभारते च तत्र तत्र नियोगान्तः ससुपुत्रत्वमिव वर्तते ।

Medh. on Manu, IX, 59.

2. R.M. Das, Women in Manu and His Seven Commentators, p. 233.

3. Kullūka on Manu, IX, 59.

4. विप्रवर्तितव्यां नियोगव्ययान्ते यन्निवारणे यथाशक्तं उपपन्ने उक्तिः

येषां ज्ञाना जनकसुपुत्रावप्यौ च परस्परं गुरुत्वमुपसृज्य व्यवहरेताम् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 62.

5. Manu, IX, 66-8.



custom is not permissible now<sup>1</sup>. Visvarūpa, while commenting on a verse of Yājñavalkya, condemns this custom and says that it is contrary to the Smṛti laws. Whatever has been said about 'niyoga' was for <sup>the</sup> Sudras and the kings who <sup>have</sup> had no heir to the throne. He illustrates an example from the Mahābhārata and adds that the legend of sons born to the queens of Vichitravīrya <sup>through the</sup> from an intercourse with Vyāsa is as baseless as the marriage of Draupadī with the five Pāṇḍavas<sup>2</sup>. He considers this marriage as an allegory. The Brhannāradiya Purāṇa (c. 850-950 A.D.) includes <sup>forbidden in it</sup> Niyoga and remarriage in the list of practices unfit for Kali Age<sup>3</sup>.

1. वेनकालात्प्रभृति यो पुत्रमर्तुकादिस्त्रिंशं शास्त्रार्थज्ञानादपत्यनिमित्तं देवरादौ नियोज्यति तं वाय्वी नियतं गच्छन्ति । अयं च स्वीकृतनियोगनिषेधः कलियुगविषयः । तदाह बृहस्पतिः । उक्ता नियोगा मुनिना निषिद्धाः स्वयमेव तु । युगक्रमादज्ञायो यं कर्तुमन्येषामनतः ॥ तपोज्ञान समायुक्ताः कृत्स्नायुर्नराः । अपरे च स्त्री नृणां ऋक्षिणमिति निर्मिता ॥ अथवा पुनः पुत्रा कृषिमिव पुरातनैः । न ज्ञायन्तेऽपि कर्तुं ऋक्षिहोनेरिदं तैः । अतो यद्गोविन्दराजेन युगविषयव्यावस्थामज्ञात्वा सर्वं देव संतानामावे नियोगादनियोगवदाः श्रेयामिति स्वमनीषया कस्मिन् तन्मुनिव्याख्या- विरोधान्नाश्रयामहे ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 68.

2. नायं नियोगपदाः श्रेयान् । स्मृत्याचार विरोधात् ।  
----- सामान्यतः कृत्स्नवनिष्कृता विधिः । मनुष्याणामपि कृत्स्नाणामपीत्यर्थः ।  
तथा च समाचारः । यत्पुनर्व्याख्येन विविधवीर्यमायास्वीयत्योत्पादनं, तदुद्गीपदी विवाहपदनाश्रयम् । अथवा शास्त्राणामप्यन्वयदायै राज्यपरिपालनाय नियोगो-  
-ऽभ्यनुज्ञायते ।

Viśva. on Yāj., I, 69.

3. Br. Nār. Purāṇa, 22, 13-4.

Āpastamba and his commentator Haradatta both had condemned 'Niyoga' as undesirable<sup>1</sup>. It is true that this custom was widely prevalent from very early times<sup>2</sup>. The R̥gveda<sup>3</sup> also hints at <sup>it</sup>this custom<sup>4</sup>. In many ancient societies women were considered as transferable property and after the death of their husbands, their younger brothers took possession of the property inclusive of their wives too<sup>4</sup>. But the custom of niyoga does not appear to have had any integral connection with it, and its disappearance in the period of our study meant a sort of disability on the widows.

#### Widow - Remarriage

About a betrothed girl it was said that if her husband died before the marriage then she might marry her brother-in-law (Devara)<sup>5</sup>. But what about those unfortunate women whose husbands died after their marriage? The term 'Punarbhū' found in the

1. Ā.D.S., 2, 10. 27, 5-7.

पाणिनिन्यो मृतु को दोषः । तद्व्यतिथिम् इत्यादि । तस्य पाणीर्व्यतिथि-  
उभयोर्दपत्तौ नरको भवति ।

Hara. on Ā.D.S., 2, 10. 27, 6.

2. Westermarck, History of Human Marriage, Vol. III, pp. 207-20.

3. R̥gveda 10, 40, 2.

4. Kane, Dharma Śāstra Kā Itihāsa (Hindi), Vol. I, p. 341.

5. यस्याः कन्याया वाग्दाने कृते सति मर्ता प्रियेतु ताप्तेन वक्ष्यमाणीनानुष्ठानेन  
मर्तुः सोदरप्राता परिणयेत् ॥

and

कन्यायां दक्षुत्कायां सत्यामर्षजातविवाहायां यदि जुत्कदो वरी प्रियेत तदा देवराय  
पित्रादिभिर्वाऽसौ कन्या दातव्या यदि सा स्वीकरोति ॥

dictum of the early writers suggests that they could marry a second time.<sup>1</sup> The term was used about that widow whose second marriage was solemnised. A verse that occurs in the Nārada (c. 100-500 A.D.) and the Parāśara Smṛtis (c. 600-900 A.D.) and the Agni Purāṇa (c. 900 A.D.) shows that a widow and in some cases an other woman too could have another husband.<sup>2</sup> The five calamities after which a woman was allowed to have another husband were: when there could be found no trace of the husband, when he was dead, when he took to asceticism, and when he was impotent and corrupt.

But it seems that in our time this custom of widow remarriage was losing ground as almost all the commentators of Smṛtis that flourished in this age, speak against it. Medhātithi a commentator of Manu (ninth century) was strongly against it,<sup>3</sup> and, referring to the verse found in Nārada, Parāśara etc.,<sup>4</sup> he suggested that 'pati' means one who gives protection, not the husband himself.<sup>5</sup> Viśvarūpa, while commenting on a verse of Yājñavalkya, declares that the marriage ceremony for the second time should not be performed. The laws of Manu and Yājñavalkya

1. Kāśyapa, Daudhāyana quoted in S.C.S., p. 75; V.D.S., 17, 19-20; Nārada, XIII, 45; Manu, IX, 176; Yāj., I, 67.

2. नष्टे मृते प्रवृत्तिके जीवे च पतिते पती ।

पञ्चमस्य नारीणां पतिरन्यो विधीयते ॥

Nārada, XIII, 97; Parāśara, IV, 30; Agni Purāṇa, 154-5-6.

3. Medh. on Manu, V, 163.

4. Nārada, XIII, 97; Parāśara, IV, 30.

5. इति तत्र पतनस्य पतितस्यान्येन वैरग्न्यन्वितनाम्नानुदयः ।

Medh. on Manu, V, 157.

in this context are regarded as applicable to those only who are inspired by sexual desires, and as such they are not deemed as proper.<sup>1</sup> Aparārka, a twelfth century commentator of Yājñavalkya, also says that this custom was of by-gone ages and is not proper for the present age; he also quotes Brahmapurāṇa in his support.<sup>2</sup>

The son of a 'Punarbhū' was included in the list of the Brāhmanas ineligible for invitation in the Śrāddha ceremony.<sup>3</sup> He was also not entitled to inherit property, but could get only bare maintenance.<sup>4</sup> This is sufficient to prove that the lawgivers did not sanction widow remarriage.

1. यथैव स्तयोनि पुनर्वैतुसंयोगात् पुनर्यु कर्तव्यं । स्वयमेव योनिरपि क्षीयते ॥  
 - - - - - यथाह मनु 'सर्वविदस्तयोनिः स्यात् - पुनः संस्कारमस्ति' इति  
 ततः कर्तव्यं । इदं तु जीवितं विधानं, न कर्तव्यं योनिवदेति । - - - - -  
 तस्मात् पुनः संस्कार इत्याचक्षतेऽपि ॥

Viśva. on Yāj., I, 67.

2. Aparārka, p. 99.

3. Manu, III, 155; Yāj., I, 222.

4. Medh. on Manu, IX, 160.

The testimony of Alberuni further gives an evidence that the widows could not remarry<sup>1</sup>. But this might be said only for the old and inadvertent widows. The so-called responsible men of the society were humane and kind enough to allow the childless child-widow to marry a second time in view of their tender age and long life ahead<sup>2</sup>. The marriage of the parents of Vastupāla and Tejahpāla is worth mentioning in this connection. The Prabandha Cintāmaṇi informs us that the father of Vastupāla and Tejahpāla married a child widow<sup>3</sup>. The later writers prohibit this rule altogether considering it illegal in the present age.

No where in the inscriptions or in the records of the foreigners <sup>do</sup> we find any reference <sup>to</sup> of widows getting remarried. Therefore, it may be said that this custom was steadily waning ~~away~~ in our period, ~~as the people had to honour the words of so many lawgivers.~~ But it <sup>is</sup> also true that <sup>the ideals of Dharmasāstra were</sup> ~~only the higher~~ <sup>among the higher</sup> classes, accepted their dictums and in all ages and times the lower classes <sup>followed their own</sup> ~~were free to adopt any~~ practices <sup>and in</sup> ~~they liked.~~ In this <sup>age</sup> ~~case too~~ <sup>we see that</sup> widow remarriage <sup>appear to have been</sup> ~~was~~ popular among them<sup>4</sup>.

#### Sati Custom

The reprehensible custom of burning the body of the living woman on the funeral pyre of her lord is commonly known as

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1. Sachau, Vol. II, Ch. XIX, p. 155.

2. C.V. Vaidya, History of Med. Hindu India, Vol. II, Ch. II, p. 190.

3. P.C., Tr. Tawney, pp. 155-6.

4. Dharmabindu, p. 185.

~~/Sati custom~~. This custom was prevalent in India since very early times. Whether it had an indigeneous origin or was adopted from a foreign country, is difficult to decide. It was found among the Gauls, Greeks, Slavs, Goths, Scythians and other peoples too.<sup>1</sup> When this custom ~~was~~ originated in India is a matter of doubt. Neither in the Vedic literature nor in the Grhyasūtras <sup>is</sup> there ~~any~~ <sup>clear</sup> reference to <sup>the</sup> Sati custom. There are very few references to Sati in the Mahābhārata. But this much is sure that it was well-established in our time<sup>2</sup>. Some lawgivers of our time recommended it, but some other <sup>p</sup> prohibited it. Surprisingly enough, Manu who has given detailed account of the rights and duties of the couple, is silent about Sati which shows that he was not in favour of such an inhuman custom. Medhātithi too does not sanction it. He has compared it with 'Syena sacrifice'. In his view it is a kind of suicide, ~~and~~ prohibited for women. As <sup>is</sup> the Syena sacrifice ~~is~~ not a meritorious act and is illegal in the eyes of men, so is this custom too, although it was sanctioned by Angiras<sup>3</sup>. Devanabhatta also condemns it and says that

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1. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, Ch. IV, p. 117; E. Thompson, Suttee, pp. 24-5.

2. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, ~~Ch. IV~~, p. 126.

3. पुंवत्स्त्रीणामपि प्रतिनिद जात्यत्यागी, यदप्यंगिस्ता पतिमनुम्रियेत् इत्युक्तं तदपि नित्यकदवश्यं कर्तव्यं फलस्तुतिस्तत्रास्ति फलकामायाचाधिकारं स्येनतुल्यता तस्य स्येन हिंस्याद् भूतानि इत्यधिकारस्य उतिप्रवृत्तारदेनाभ्यक्तया सत्यापि प्रवृत्ती न कर्तव्यम् एवमिहापि उतिप्रवृत्ताभिलाषायाः सत्यपि प्रतिषेधे तदतिशयेन वरणी प्रवृत्त्युपपत्तेः न शास्त्रीयत्वमतास्तस्य पतिमनुमरणेऽपि स्त्रियाः प्रतिषेधः ॥

'Anvārohana' propounded by Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra and Āṅgīras is baser than 'brahmacharya' as its merits are lesser than those of <sup>the latter</sup> ~~the latter~~ <sup>1</sup>.

The "antra writers were always humane towards women - they gave an exalted position to women in every sphere. In one of the "antras it is said that in every woman the goddess lives in a concealed form and if any woman decides to burn herself on the funeral pyre of her <sup>dead</sup> husband, she gets hell<sup>2</sup>. However, the hold of the "antras was limited. In some popular works also we notice the view against the Satī custom. Thus Bāṇa (7th century) was ~~also~~ strongly <sup>opposed to</sup> ~~against~~ such a practice and condemns <sup>ed</sup> it vehemently by advocating that a person attains <sup>ed</sup> a fixed place determined by his own 'Karma', and one who ascends <sup>ed</sup> the funeral pyre commits <sup>ted</sup> suicide and attains <sup>ed</sup> hell, and this act <sup>was</sup> is not a guarantee of reunion after death<sup>3</sup>.

In spite of all this the Satī custom continued to gain prevalence as time went on. Among the strong supporters of Satī custom mention may be made of Vyāsa, Hārīta, Āṅgīras, Śaṅkha, Parāśara etc. By illustrating an example of she-pigeon who burnt herself in the fire after her lord's death, Vyāsa<sup>4</sup> supports the

1. S.C.V., p. 254.

2. Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, X, 79-80.

3. Kadambarī, pp. 318-20.

4. पत्न्यैव संप्रदीप्तं प्रविशेत् हुतात्मन् । तत्र विमानं यत्नं पतारिं साऽम्बपत्यम् ॥  
ततः स्वर्गं गतः पदो मायया सह संगतः । कृष्णा मुखस्तन्निभे च सह मा  
यावति ॥



custom. According to Harita (c. 400-700 A.D.) a woman who follows her husband on the funeral pyre, <sup>glorifies</sup> ~~leads to glory~~ her three families.<sup>1</sup> Samkha and Angiras <sup>spoke</sup> ~~speak~~ of the great merits that a woman was supposed to enjoy, if she took recourse to Sati. Just as a snake charmer makes the snake come out, in the same manner the 'Sati-to-be' gets her husband from the place wherever he may be and enjoys happiness with him<sup>2</sup>. Their views have been quoted by Apararka in his commentary on <sup>the</sup> Yajñavalkya Smṛti. <sup>According to Angiras,</sup> There is no greater duty <sup>for</sup> a woman than to ascend the funeral pyre of her husband after his death<sup>3</sup>. But <sup>as cited in a later edition</sup> ~~he~~ <sup>has</sup> prohibited it for the

1. मातुर्कं पैतुर्कं चापि यत्र वैव प्रदीयते । कुलं पुनात्येता मर्तारं याऽनुमञ्जतीति ।

2. तिस्रः कोट्योऽधोकोटी च यानि लोमानि मानुषा ।

तावन्मर्तारं वसिष्ठा मर्तारं याऽनुमञ्जतीति ॥

व्याल्लाही यथासर्वं क्तादुद्धरेत् विलास ।

तदुद्धृत्य सा नारी तेनैव सह मीयते ॥

तत्र सा मर्तुमस्मा स्तुयमानाऽप्सरोगणैः ।

क्रीडते यत्किञ्च सार्धं यावदिन्द्राश्चतुर्धरेति ॥

ब्रह्मणी वाऽथ मित्रघ्नः क्रुशणी वा मृत्युपतिः ।

पुनात्यविष्वा समादाय दूता त या ॥

मृते मर्तारि या नारी समारोहदुहतास्तम् ।

साऽनुमञ्जती समाचारास्कर्त्तुमर्हति ॥

यावच्चण्वी मृते पत्यौ स्त्री नात्मानं प्रदालीतु ।

तावन्न मुच्यते सा हि स्त्री गरीरात्कर्त्तव्येति ॥

Quoted by Vij. on Yaj., I, 86; Parāśara, IV, 32-3.

3. सर्वाणिमेव नारीणामग्निप्रमत्तादुते ।

नान्यो धर्मो हि विज्ञो मृते मर्तारि कर्हिचित् ॥

Angiras quoted by Apararka, Yaj., Trivendram ed., p. 109.

Brahmana women.<sup>1</sup> In the twelfth century, however, Viṣṇaśvara laid down that to become Sati was the 'dharma' of all the women excluding only those who were small children or were pregnant.<sup>2</sup>

Some lawgivers were of the view that the Brahmana widows could burn themselves only on the funeral pyres of their husbands. If the husband died in a foreign country, she could not get herself burnt in the fire only on hearing the sad news. It is stated that by taking the corpse of her husband she should enter the fire.<sup>3</sup> Aparārka (c. 1125-30 A.D.) was of the view that she should take this step after matured and deep thinking.<sup>4</sup>

That this custom was not as popular among the Brāhmanas as in the royal clans may be proved by a number of references to it, found in the history of our period. Bāṇa tells us that Yaśomati,

1. या स्त्री ब्रह्मणः स्त्रीया वृत्तं यतिमनुब्रजेत् ।  
सा स्वर्गमाप्नुयतीति न ना स्त्री न वीति नयेत् ॥  
Angiras quoted by Aprarka, p. 109.
2. अयं सयसीता स्त्रीनामयतिनेनामवातामस्यानां अपावृत्तानां सप्रारणी चयः ।  
Vij. on Yaj., I, 86.
3. वृत्तं कर्तारमावाय ब्रह्मणो वीह-भारविश्व ।  
Vyasa, II, 53.
4. Apararka on Yaj., I, 87.

the queen mother of king Harṣa, plunged into the fire even before the death of her husband as there was no hope of his life and she desired to die as a 'sadhavā'<sup>1</sup>. Though this is not an actual case of Satī, <sup>it</sup> ~~but~~ may be understood in the same context. After the death of her husband, Rājyasrī too was going to enter the fire<sup>2</sup> when her brother persuaded her and took back to his home. Hers was a clear case of 'anumarāṇa' in which a woman on hearing the news of her husband's demise plunges<sup>3</sup> into fire with the ashes or 'pādukā' or some other things of remembrance of her husband or without any thing. Kalhana's famous chronicle of Kashmir, the Rājataranginī, is full of the references to queens who reluctantly or willingly ~~have~~ follow<sup>4</sup> the Satī custom. Queen Surendravatī and other two queens became 'Satī' after the death of king Śaṅkerāvarma<sup>3</sup>. After the death of king Yaśaskara, his devoted wife Trailokyadevī got herself burnt with him<sup>4</sup>. When king Kṣemagupta took leave<sup>5</sup> from this world, his wives became 'Satī'<sup>5</sup>. After the demise of king Ananta Deva, queen Sūryamatī plunged into the fire<sup>6</sup>. When king Jalasa died, his seven married wives and one 'kept' one named Jayamatī ascended the funeral pyre

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1. H.C., tr. Cowell, Ch. V, p. 155.

2. H.C., Ch. VIII, p. 391.

3. तिस्रः पुत्रैश्चत्वारो राज्ञो राजानमभ्युः ॥

Raj. V, 226.

4. Ibid, VI, 107.

5. Ibid, VI, 196.

6. एवं विष्णुसोऽत्वं संप्रसाद्य धुविस्मिता । कर्णीर्याददाज्जम्पां ज्वलिते वातवेदिनि

Ibid, VII, 478.

of their lord<sup>1</sup>. When king Utarga committed suicide his queen Sahajā smeared her body with his blood and entered the fire. She was formerly only a maid-in-waiting, but the king made her his queen later on. Her exemplary conduct was indeed an ideal<sup>2</sup>. His other queens lived in Lohara province. Some of them also entered the fire on hearing the sad news<sup>3</sup>. After the death of Vyaddamaṅgala, his wife and mother burnt themselves by lighting their own house<sup>4</sup>. When Mallerāja died in the battlefield, his two wives entered the fire in their own castle. ~~And~~ the six women who had enjoyed all the pleasures with the king got themselves burnt<sup>5</sup>. His another wife Nandā, on seeing such a scene, decided to plunge into the fire. She actually did ~~after~~ <sup>to her</sup> exhorting ~~his~~ son to take revenge of the murder of their father<sup>6</sup>. When her husband Kōsthaka was taken ~~as~~ prisoner, his wife went to him. As she was ready to die, her people persuaded her not to do so. But she turned

1. सप्त मन्मथानि कानुसुया देव्यः परिणयाहता । अवहदापि जयमत्यभिधानात्मन्नुः ॥

Ibid, VII, 724.

2. कान्तास्त्रीरिषास्यन्कुतसान्द्रांगिरागया । प्रमणा ह्यन उवाञ्जल्यं प्रविश्याग्निं त्वा-  
पितु ॥

Ibid, VII, 859.

3. Ibid, VII, 862.

4. पातुस्यात्मजामल्लापत्ययोस्तस्य गहिनी । स्वया त्वं स्ववसतीरादीप्य दहती पुता ॥

Ibid, VII, 1468.

5. Ibid, VII, 1486-88.

सर्वमभोगमगिन्यस्तदन्तःपुरयोनिताम् । परिवारांगना बह्वी षट् बाह्य विवेदिरे ॥

Ibid, VII, 1488.

6. श्रितार्ता विवेदिरेव पुत्री सत्रीः पितृभिजाः । जामदग्न्याभितं वीरे शब्दवति नृपतिवती ॥  
अनिशङ्कोव दीप्ताग्नी गृहे स्वं निरदायतु । प्रतुत्यन्ती भिराडी भिरिष ज्वाला-  
भिरावृता ॥

Ibid, VII, 1493-4.

a deaf ear to them and died by plunging into the fire. By her pious conduct she is said to have raised the glory of her husband<sup>1</sup>.

When king Uccala gave up the ghost his wife Vijjalā escaped from the castle and ascended the funeral pyre of her husband<sup>2</sup>. It is said in the Rāsmāla, a Gujarat chronicle that when king Oodayadit of Dhārā expired, his two queens practised Sati<sup>3</sup>. Likewise after the death of Prince Jūg Dev, his three queens happily became Sati<sup>4</sup>. When Rā Khengār breathed his last his wife Rānik Devēe became Sati, after giving the proof of her chastity to king Sidhrāj<sup>5</sup>. Some of the dramas and stories of this period also testifies to the prevalence of <sup>this</sup> ~~Sati~~ <sup>custom</sup> system in the society. The Priyadarsikā of king Harṣa<sup>6</sup>, the Kaumudī Mahotsava of Vijjakā<sup>7</sup>, the Śṛṅgāramanjari Kathā of Bhoja<sup>8</sup> and the Kathāsaritsāgara of Somadeva<sup>9</sup> are noteworthy in this connection.

३. जीवन्मुक्तोऽपि उन्मत्तौ त्वया स प्रतिरित्यसौ । कृत्यावशेयार्थिं प्राविशयदुष्कृतम् ॥  
मदिव्यामोहनिर्वृत्तैकलव्यस्याभिमानिनः । त्वानुमान्यां च कुतः कोष्ठकस्योच्चरैः  
शिरः ॥  
Ibid, VIII, 2335, 2339.

१. अग्रतो विष्कटा तावन्निर्गत्य प्राविशन्निताम्  
Ibid, VIII, 367.

2. A.C. Forbes, Rāsmāla, VIII, p. 153.

3. Ibid, p. 153.

4. Ibid, pp. 156, 168-69.

5. Priya, Act I, p. 16.

6. Kau. M., Act II, p. 49.

7. Ś.M.K., p. 20.

8. O.S., Vol. II, Ch. XXV, pp. 201-2; Vol. VI, Ch. LXVIII, p. 4;  
Ch. LXXII, p. 97; Ch. LXXIII, p. 105; Vol. VII, Ch. XCVI,  
p. 108.

How well established was this custom may be noticed from the attitude of Jainas in this regard. It is interesting to note that the Jainas did not believe in its sanctity and made a joke of it<sup>1</sup>, but in some of their books its <sup>recommen-</sup> <sup>ed-</sup> ~~recommendation is found~~. It was surely due to the fact that this custom <sup>had</sup> <sup>become</sup> ~~was~~ deep-rooted in the then society and the communities firstly <sup>d</sup> ~~oppose~~ to it could not remain untouched by it. Udyotana Suri, a Jaina author of the eighth century, compares the evening with a girl of a noble family, who on the death of her husband i.e. <sup>the man</sup> ~~'Sati'~~, wears Kusumbha red clothes and follows him into the sea when her lord is seen no more<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, it is said therein that it is the ~~duty~~ of a woman to live no more when her husband is dead<sup>3</sup>.

The Arab writers Sulaiman<sup>4</sup> and Alberuni<sup>5</sup> who came to India in the tenth and the eleventh centuries respectively, <sup>informed</sup> ~~tell~~ us of the existence of this custom in their time.

Some of the inscriptions of our time bear testimony to the prevalence of this custom. In <sup>one of them</sup> ~~an inscription~~ a widowed mother asked her son to take the rein of the kingdom in his hands and herself wants to become Sati<sup>6</sup>. Even a Sudra woman did not lag behind in following the highest ideal of a chaste woman. She was Dekabbe who became Sati, although her parents forbade her to do so. Being glorified by their daughter's pious act they raised a memorial pillar in her memory<sup>7</sup>.

1. Upamiti, p. 735; K.P., Sundaridattakathanakam, p. 174.

2. पुराणरिदखेन युक्तं रत्नं राजकुमारः । पुत्रं वानिपत्यं वृत्तमनुसरति प्रपुत्रं मन्त्रिणम्  
Anvalaya, (line 20, p. 82).

3. मरितान्तरं एव धर्मो ध्यायिष्ये ददुःखं मरितं तत्र वर्धः । देवः पद्विज्जयः एव मन्त्रो तत्र देवोक्तिः ॥

Ibid, (line 10, p. 240).

4. Nadvi, Arab Aur Bhārata Ke Sambandha, p. 26.

5. Sachan, Vol. II, Ch. XIX, p. 155.

6. Nepalg Ins. (706 A.D.),

I.A., Vol. IX, p. 164.

7. Belturu Ins. (Saka 979)

Rājasthān which has been famous for chivalry and romance, also had the honour of producing numerous chaste and brave women, who, ~~in order to save their honour~~ either became Satī or practised Jauhar. <sup>Many</sup> Some inscriptions recording Satī have been noticed. The Ghatiyāla inscription (V.S. 977) tells us that Sāmvaladevī, the wife of Rāmuka became Satī after his death<sup>1</sup>. Another inscription informs that the mother of Chandamahāsena of Bholarpur practised Satī<sup>2</sup>. An inscription of V.S. 1234 refers to the wife of Sundara Pōd, who became Satī<sup>3</sup>. It is said in an inscription (V.S. 1237) that Pālhanadevī and Mātādevī, the queens of Rānā "ihunapāla practised Satī<sup>4</sup>. The Unstra inscription (V.S. 1249) speaks of Mohilī Rājī, who on the death of her husband, became Satī<sup>5</sup>. The Sahamarana of hundred queens of king Gāṅgeyadeva <sup>with</sup> the king at Prayāga is mentioned in many inscriptions. It may be taken as <sup>a</sup>the case of Satī<sup>6</sup>.

The prevalence of Satī custom ~~in the Chandella society~~ is <sup>fully revealed</sup> proved by the pieces of Art contained in the Museum at Jaipurāho.

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1. Ins. of Northern India, No. 107.
  2. Z.D.M.G., Vol. XL, p. 39.
  3. E.I., Vol. XX, pp. 58, 168.
  4. P.R.A.S.W.C., 1911-12, p. 53.
  5. Ins. of Northern India, No. 423.
  6. Khairha Plate Yasahkarnadeva, (year 823),  
C.I.I., Vol. IV, Pt. I, p. 297;  
Jabalpur Plate of Jayasimha, (year 918),  
Ibid, p. 303;  
Jabalpur Copper Plate Ins. of Yasahkarnadeva (A.D. 1122),  
E.I., Vol. II, p. 4.



We find here two stones in which husband<sup>and</sup> the wife are depicted lying side by side. The figures of Sun and Moon appear on the top; ~~and~~ on the one side there is an 'Argha' of Lord Śiva and in the centre there is a square hole (Kunda)<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>Sometimes</sup> Even gaṇikās who were notorious for their fideness, did not lag behind in following the ideal of their <sup>dear</sup> ~~homely~~ sisters. Some such courtesans are mentioned by Dāmodara (8th cen. A.D.) in his famous treatise Kuṭṭanīmatam<sup>2</sup>.

It can not be definitely said that in each and every case women became Satis voluntarily. but most of them did so at their own will. ~~There was no religious or social influence on them.~~ It was an outcome of their unfathomed love and fidelity towards their lords. Alberuni remarks that it was absolutely the free will of the widows that goaded them either to adopt the course of Sati or to live on. But generally those who were pregnant or had a minor son to look after, refrained ~~themselves~~ from becoming Satis<sup>3</sup>. Sugandhā, the queen of king Śaṅkaravarmana of Kasmira, preferred to live for the sake of her child and managed the administration in his minority<sup>4</sup>. Many other widowed queens who administered the kingdom ably are also <sup>known</sup> ~~worth noting~~<sup>5</sup>.

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1. Fig. 88;

U. Agarwal, Khajurāho Sculptures And Their Significance,

~~Ch. V~~, p. 121, Fig. 88.

2. Kuṭṭa, vs. 559-61.

3. Sachau, Vol. II, ~~Ch. XIX~~, p. 155.

4. Rāj., VI, 226-7.

5. Infra, Ch. V, pp.

But there were such cases also in which force was employed to make the reluctant widow to ascend the funeral pyre. Queen Diddā and Jayamatī were unwilling to become Satis, but according to the custom they had to show that they were voluntarily following <sup>the</sup> Sati custom. They bribed their ministers and asked them to come at the right moment to persuade them in not doing so. Queen Diddā was successful in her plan, but in the case of Jayamatī the minister did not turn up and the poor queen had to become the victim of the custom in order to save her dignity<sup>1</sup>.

The reasons behind the popularity of Sati custom in our period <sup>can</sup> ~~could~~ be found in the society itself. We have already seen that in this period ~~the~~ widow marriage and 'Niyoga' were prohibited for the widows. They had either to adopt a celibate life observing austerity throughout ~~their life~~ or to burn themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands. The latter course was very much praised and recommended by the authorities on ~~law~~<sup>2</sup>. Those who followed it were greatly honoured and suitable memorials were erected in their memory. This served as an incentive to those who were unwilling to immolate themselves and they too <sup>emulated</sup> ~~joined hands with~~ their sisters who followed it.

The Muslim invasion and its impact on the Hindus, according to Thomas, is also one of the reasons that led to the popularity of the Sati custom<sup>3</sup>. But how far it is correct, is difficult to

1. Rāj. VI, 196, VIII, 363.

2. Supra, pp. 154-6.

3. P. Thomas, Indian Women Through The Ages, ~~Ch. VIII~~, p. 233.

ascertain and it may be pointed out that the impact of the Muslims was mainly felt after twelfth century, ~~and even after it,~~ this custom existed in society ~~before~~.

The custom of Satī was so deeply-rooted in the society that the surviving widows were cruelly treated and had to bear unbearable misery. Sometimes the environment compelled them to leave the home. How miserable would have been the condition of the surviving widow, may be imagined ~~by~~ the testimony of an inscription of the thirteenth century<sup>1</sup>.

In such circumstances, naturally the widows ~~felt~~ that the horror and pain of burning alive was not as unbearable as that of living without their husbands. After surveying the ~~whole~~ life of a widow, we may say that on the whole their condition was pitiable and they were generally looked down upon.

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1. "Those who do not bind her and throw her into fire and kill her, would get the sin of prostituting their wives".  
Cited by P. Thomas, <sup>op. cit.</sup> ~~ibid~~, p. 235.

## Chapter V

### Women In Different Stages of Life

Chapter VWomen In Different Walks of Life

The careers followed by women help to a great extent in assessing their status in different walks of life.

Teachers

First we shall take up the teaching career. As has already been said in the first chapter, the ladies of the upper strata of society were fairly educated. However, teaching as a career was not very popular among the ladies. The Jaina literature of this period does not contain any reference to lady-teachers. We do not find any representation of lady-teachers in the art also. So, it may be inferred that the number of lady teachers, was not large.

The solitary reference to a lady teacher is found in the *Malatīmādhavaṃ*<sup>1</sup> of Bhavabhūti (8th cen. A.D.). It says that *Kaṇḍakī* used to teach in a school. There is mention of her disciple also. Perhaps there must have been other lady-teachers also. Here it is worthwhile to note that the examples of lady-teachers are found in the history of Kambuja as well. It is said that the elder sister of the queen of Jayavarman VII used to impart education in a *Bauddha Vihara*.<sup>2</sup>

Muns

Some women chose to adopt the life of a nun and used to preach. Both Jainism and Buddhism allowed this facility to them.

1. M.M., Act I, p. 30, Act X, n. 464.

2. Kambuja Inscriptions, no. p. 575.

They occupied honourable position. But it may be pointed out that Buddhism was on the decline in this period and the number of Buddhist nuns must have been very small. Jainism, on the other hand encouraged women to adopt nunhood, and as a result we find that the number of Jaina nuns was quite large<sup>1</sup>.

### ✓ Medical Career

It seems that some women were interested in medical studies also and some excelled in gynsecology. One such lady was Rūsā who had written a book on midwifery<sup>2</sup>.

### ✓ Courtesans

Although the ladies of the cultured and royal families were very much interested in music and dance and used to receive training either from male teachers or from female experts, they could not adopt music as a career. It was disgraceful for a royal lady to choose music as a career. But music as a career was not altogether conspicuous by its absence in society. A particular class of women - courtesans used to be benefitted by adopting this career. The other words for courtesans were - Vesya, Ganika, Vāra-strī, Kṣudrā, Sūtā, Lajjika, Bandhurā, Kumbhā, Bhogyā, Bhujisya, Nagaravedhū, Panyāṅganā, Rūpajīvā, Śālabhañjika, Kāmarekhā etc.

One who earns her livelihood by 'Vesā' or dress and beauty is called Vesya<sup>3</sup>. The main aim of adopting the profession of ganika was to earn money<sup>4</sup> by satisfying the desires of men who

— 1. Infra, Ch. VI, pp. 244-6.

2. Nadvi, Arab Aur Bhārat Ke Sambandhe, p. 122.

3. वैश्या इति वैश्वदीप्यति वाचरति, वैश्वं पश्ययोगेन जीवति वा

Kutta, Preface, p. 6.

4. अवधीत्य कसिद्धं कुरु गौरवमुत्तम-पदः पुंसः ।  
वस्मादुत्तां हि मुग्धे कसिद्धी रूपमिमांशम् ॥

visited her. The *ganikās* used to give dance and music performance before everybody who visited them and took money for this.

Due to their charms and peculiar duties the courtesans were successful in making an important place in the society, and at many places they figure prominently in the literature. *Mānu* was very critical about *ganikā* and opined that a *Brāhmaṇa* should not accept food given by her and one who violated the rule could never attain higher worlds.<sup>1</sup> He further laid down that those who depended on the income of the prostitutes were unfit to offer alms.<sup>2</sup> He considers them as a social evil which the king should do away with by imparting punishments.<sup>3</sup> A very simple punishment for killing a prostitute, was prescribed by him.<sup>4</sup> His commentators *Medhātithi* (c. 900 A.D.) and *Kullūka* (c. 1150-1300 A.D.) also agreed with him as regards the rules

1. *Mānu*, IV, 209, 219.

2. *Ibid*, IV, 984.

3. *Ibid*, IX, 259.

4. *Ibid*, XI, 138.



relating to courtesans<sup>1</sup>. Gautama and his commentator Haradatta also held the same views and prescribed a very simple penance for one who killed a Vesya<sup>2</sup>. Yājñavalkya gives two kinds of the 'Kept' in which 'Bhujisya' is also included. We have noticed earlier that 'Bhujisya' is another name for Vesya. It may be that 'ganikās' were also kept by men. According to Vijñānesvara, 'Bhujisya' did not reside in the home but lived elsewhere as a 'Kept' of a particular person. Any other person who did intercourse with her had to pay fifty panas<sup>3</sup>. 'Avaruddhā' was another term used by Yājñavalkya for the 'ganikā' and was

1. वेशः पण्यवृत्तिः स्तव्यो जीवति स्त्री वा पुमान्वा

Medh. on Manu, IV, 84.

उपायनमनुपयुज्यमानं स्वशिल्पकौशलं दर्शयित्वाऽनुष्ठाय धर्मं नयन्ति । एवं पण्य-  
योगिता निमुण्णारणीपवारिणासत्प्रीतिदत्तेन ।

Medh. on Manu, IX, 259.

वेशः पण्यस्त्रिया वृत्तिः तस्या यो जीवति स्त्री पुमान्वा स वेज्जवान् एतेषां च न  
प्रतिग्रहणीयात् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IV, 84.

गणिकावेश्या तस्या जन्मं तच्च न भुञ्जीत् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IV, 209.

गणगणिक्योरन्नं च कर्मान्तराजिणः स्वार्णदिलीपस्य वाञ्छितम् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IV, 219.

पण्यस्त्रियश्च परवशीकर्णानुल्ला

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 259.

2. वेश्याकृणां जीवन्त्यां ब्रह्मकृणां ज्ञात्यां किंचिदियमष्टमुष्टि पक्षेति किंचिदित्येतत् ।

Hara. on Gaut., XXII, 27.

3. गृह एव स्यात्तव्यमित्येवं पुरुषान्तराभिनीयतीति निरुद्धा अवरुद्धा । पुरुषान्तराभिनीय-  
पश्चिन्नाः मुचिष्याः । तासु च सर्वपुरुषासाधारणतया गम्यास्वपि गच्छन् पंचाश-  
कान् दण्डनीयः ॥

explained 'one who resided in the home of a particular man and no other man could have connection with her'. Quoting <sup>the</sup> Skanda Purāṇa, Viṣṇāśvara further says that the courtesans were of the fifth caste called Pañchachūdā. Those who were not the 'kept' of any particular person <sup>could</sup> might have intercourse with the men of the same or superior caste and by doing so they could not be termed as 'sinners'. The king could not punish either the courtesans or the men with whom they had any connection<sup>1</sup>. It was ordained that if after receiving the money as a price, a prostitute refused to have intercourse with the giver of it, she had to pay twice the price. If the case was the contrary and the person after having intercourse with her did not give the price, then the same fine was imposed on him<sup>2</sup>. There is a reference to one such courtesan in <sup>the</sup> Kuttanīmatam. She had to pay twice the price she received from her paramour, as she could not fulfil his wishes at the appointed time<sup>3</sup>. The same law is

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1. स्मर्यते हि स्कन्द पुराणी । 'पंचकुडा नाम कांक्षाध्वस्तस्तत्तन्ततिर्विश्यास्या  
पंचमी जातिस्ति' । अस्तस्तासां नियतपुरुषपरिणयविधिविधिरन्या समानीकुष्ट-  
जातिपुरुषाभिमननेनादृष्टदोषा नापि दण्डस्तासु बानवहदासु मञ्जुतां पुरुषाणां

Vij. on Yāj., II, 290.

2. यदा शुल्कं गृहीत्वा स्वस्याऽपि अर्पयति नेच्छति तदा शिष्टः शुल्कं दद्यात् ।  
तथा शुल्कं दत्त्वा स्वयमनिच्छतः स्वस्वस्य पुंसः शुल्कानिरेव ।

Vij. on Yāj., II, 292.

3. Kuttā, V. 341.

pronounced in the Matsya Purāṇa also which deals with the duties of a courtesan in detail<sup>1</sup>. We find references to courtesans in the popular and religious literature of our period. According to Dāṇa, the courtesans were a necessary part of the court of the king<sup>2</sup>. They used to give dance - performance on auspicious occasions<sup>3</sup>. Yuan-Chwang also testifies to the fact that the courtesans were the necessary element of the society and refers to Sundarī or Sundarnandī who was a harlot<sup>4</sup>. That the courtesans had an important place in the seraglios of the kings, is further proved by the Rājatarāṅginī (C. 1150-60 A.D.). King Yaśaskara (C. 939-48 A.D.) is said to have made Lallā the head of his seraglio, though she was an ordinary dancing girl<sup>5</sup>. King Utkarṣa (C. 1889 A.D.) also gave the same status to Sahajā who was a courtesan<sup>6</sup>. Some more references to veśyās are found in it<sup>7</sup>. The Prabandhacintāmaṇi also refers to them<sup>8</sup>. The Chaulukyan king Bhīma (C. 1178-1241 A.D.) is said to have placed a hetaira in his harem. An interesting episode illustrating her chastity and merit is narrated by Merutuṅga<sup>9</sup>.

1. Matsya Purāṇa, 227, 144-45, Ch. 70, 128, 144.

2. H.C., Uch. IV, p. 194.

3. Ibid, loc. cit.

4. Waters on Yuan Chwang, Vol. I, Ch. XII, p. 389.

5. रागाञ्जलान्तकान्तानां पूर्णमधिरोपिता । उल्ला नामाभवत्यवेष्ट्या वैवस्वकारिणी

Rāj., VI, 74.

6. सापि हि पुण्यविश्वनर्तकी नाट्यमण्डपे । दृष्ट्वा लावहृदयमिन्दो राज्ञश्च पुरा ॥

Ibid, VII, 958.

7. Ibid, VII, 104, 111, 1460.

8. P.C., Tr. Tawney, Ch. II, pp. 66-68.

9. Ibid, Ch. IV, p. 116.

Besides these historical references, many more references to courtesans are found in the contemporary literature. A Jaina Purāṇa (c. 678 A.D.) also refers to them <sup>at many places</sup> ~~excessively~~. While describing the city of Rājagṛha, Ācārya Raviṣeṇa says that to the courtesans it was like the temple of Kāme<sup>1</sup>. It is said that ~~they~~ <sup>they</sup> ~~courtesans~~ were seated around king Śreṇika<sup>2</sup>. There is also a reference to Kāmalatā who was a harlot<sup>3</sup>. Vasantadāmarā <sup>has been</sup> ~~a~~ <sup>referred to as the best of the</sup> ~~courtesan~~ was considered to be the best of all courtesans<sup>4</sup>. Many references to <sup>them</sup> ~~courtesans~~ are also found in the Uttara Purāṇa<sup>5</sup>. To have connection with a courtesan was a condemnable act, according to this Purāṇa<sup>6</sup>. The Daśakumāracarita, a work of the eighth century A.D., also mentions a courtesan whose name was Kāmamañjarī<sup>7</sup>. A courtesan used to live in the house of Śaktikumāra<sup>8</sup>. She may be termed as Avaruddhā. Dāmodaragupta in the Kuttanīmatam (8th cen. A.D.) gives a vivid description of the life, qualities and duties of a prostitute. No other work can be compared to it in this regard. Some gaṇikās mentioned in

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1. Padma Purāṇa, Part I, Parva II, v. 39.

2. Ibid., p. 28.

3. Ibid., Part II, Parva 33, p. 111.

4. वसन्तदामराय गणितानुषंग ।

— Ibid., Part III, Parva 85, v. 130, p. 145/.

5. Parva 46, v. 300; Parva 57, v. 81; Parva 59, v. 259;

Parva 62, v. 368; Parva 72, v. 258.

6. Uttara Purāṇa, Parva 59, v. 75.

7. D.C., later part, UCh. II, p. 130.

8. Ibid., UCh. VI, p. 357.

a work of Siddharṣi (c. 906 A.D.) were of a high character and some others were of ordinary type<sup>1</sup>. An Apabhraṃśa work (c. 933 A.D.) says that rich persons waste<sup>a</sup> their money on the courtesans and a man who goes to a dancing girl is devoid of all good qualities<sup>2</sup>. The methods of getting rid of them are also mentioned in it<sup>3</sup>. How a visit of Nāgakumāra caused excitement among the courtesans of Mathura is described by Puṣpadanta<sup>4</sup> (C. 958-65 A.D.). The Yaśastilakacampū (C. 959 A.D.) says that the courtesans took an active part in the coronation ceremony of king Yaśodhara<sup>5</sup>. The Śṛṅgāraṃjārīkathā of the Paramāra king Hoja (c. 997-1052 A.D.), is a store-house of courtesans. Śṛṅgāraṃjārī, Mālatikā, Kuvalayāvalī, Devadattā, Lāvanyasundarī, Chitrālekṣā, Asōkavatī, Malayasundarī and Dhondhe are some of them<sup>6</sup>. Asōkavatī was expert in sword-dancing<sup>7</sup>.

The courtesans had made such an influential place in the social life of the age that even reformers like Jineśvara Sūri

1. Upamiti, pp. 374 ff., 618 ff.

2. केशहिं लङ्गहं वणिजयणु तुदुहं वंज मिदु ।  
मुञ्चहं पारु सव्वहं गुणहं केषापरि पसंतु ॥

Savayadhammadohā, v. 44.

3. Ibid., v. 45.

4. Nāya, V, I, p. 48.

5. Yaśastilakacampū, Ch. II, v. 214.

6. S.M.K., Tale II, p. 26; Tale III, p. 28; Tale IV, p. 32;  
Tale V, p. 35; Tale VIII, pp. 58-63; Tale IX, p. 66;  
Tale X, p. 76; Tale XI, pp. 79-80.

7. Ibid., Tale IX, p. 66.

(c. 1051 A.D.) had to write in detail about the connection of a śrāvaka with a dancing girl.<sup>1</sup> He says that the ganikas were mainly drawn from lower classes of the society.<sup>2</sup> But his frown at them may be noticed by his comparison of a vesyā with a stone of the washerman and with a pot in which the dog takes his meal.<sup>3</sup>

A section of the Kalāvilāsa has been devoted to the description of courtesans by Kṣemendra (second half of the eleventh century). It deals with the life, characteristics, and deeds of the dancing girls.<sup>4</sup> Somadeva's Kathāsaritsāgara (c.1063-81 A.D.) refers to them.<sup>5</sup> Hemacandra (c. 1089-1173 A.D.) also mentions them frequently.<sup>6</sup> In the Kumārapālacarita it is said that the courtesans used to perform the traditional āratī.<sup>7</sup> We also find Kumārapāla sitting amidst such women and chatting with them affectionately.<sup>8</sup> The Naisadhiyacaritam states that the courtesans were invited to entertain the marriage party.<sup>9</sup> The Mānasollāsa (a work of the 12th cen. A.D.) says that the king

1. K.P., Dattakathānakam, p. 106.

2. देखिया रयगाइयाओ डेविनीओ वा

Ibid, Kamalakathānakam, p. 116.

3. Dharmahindu, p. 15.

4. Kalāvilāsa, Canto IV, Vesyāvṛttam.

5. O.S., Vol. II, Ch. XVI, p. 28; Vol. VII, Ch. XCIII, p. 80.

6. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, pp. 53, 89, 184; Ch. IV, p. 214;

Ch. V., p. 218.

7. A.C., Canto VI, v. 32.

8. वारवनिताः कुमारपालनृपपत्न्यै उपविष्टाः

Ibid, v. 38.

9. Naisadha, Canto XVI, vs. 48, 111.

should enjoy the company of beautiful woman, among whom the dancers were preferable.<sup>1</sup> The Karakandācarīu, (c. 1065 A.D.) also mentions the vesyā and the bawd.<sup>2</sup> Rājasekhara Sūri in his Prabandha-kosa compares Vidyā (learning) to a courtesan as many persons have connections with both of them.<sup>3</sup> Some other references to courtesans are also found in it.<sup>4</sup> The Vīśaladeva Rāso says that the courtesans used to attend royal courts and performed charming dances.<sup>5</sup>

The searching eyes of the foreign travellers also noticed them. Ibn Khurdadba, while giving an account of the Deccan of the Rastrakuta period observes that concubinage was not regarded illegal in India except in Cape-Komorin.<sup>6</sup> According to Al Idrisi, a more shameful custom was prevalent in Gujarat of the twelfth century, where concubinage with all the virgins were permitted.<sup>7</sup> But this statement is hardly believable as it could not be expected of the Hindus. The statement of Alberuni further strengthens the view that prostitution was deeply rooted in the feudal society. He says : "People think with regard to harlotry that it is allowed with them (Indians)....."<sup>8</sup>

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1. Mānasollāsa, Ch. XV, III, p. 153, vs. 11-13.

2. Ch. II, 17, p. 19; Ch. VIII, 13, p. 77.

3. P.K. Bappabhattasūriprabandha, p. 31, v. 18.

4. Ibid, p. 33; Vaikachūlaprabandha, p. 77.

5. V.R. III, 75.

6. Elliot, H.I., Vol. I, p. 13.

7. Ibid, p. 89.

8. Sachau, Vol. II, p. 157.



Apart from these literary references/archaeological sources also give clues to the existence of the class of prostitutes. In the Paharpur sculptures (8th cen. A.D.) many courtesans are depicted in the act of dancing and singing<sup>1</sup>. The sculptures of Khajuraho and Bhuvaneshvara (10th-12th cen. A.D.) are remarkable examples in this regard. The Tejapura Grant of Vanamāla says that an Assam king of the ninth century A.D. granted a village with the ganikas and the servants<sup>2</sup>.

A well-experienced and grown up courtesan was called Kuttanī or bawī. In order to achieve success in their work and life, the young, inexperienced prostitutes sought her help as is clear from the Kuttanīmatam. It is said that by stretching the share of tricks she brings ruin to a family<sup>3</sup>. She used to procure paramours for the courtesan <sup>and as such</sup> ~~that was why~~ she was called procuress. She was also called Sambhālī<sup>4</sup>, Mādhavī, Arjunī, Kumbhadāsī, Gaṇerukā and Raṅgamālā<sup>5</sup>. The term Kuttanī occurs in the

1. Memoirs, A.S.I., no. 55, <sup>pp.</sup> p. 34(a), 29(d), 27(d).

2. J.A.S.B., Vol. IX, 1840, p. 766.

3. कुट्टनीं हयसि लयेः कुट्टयति नाशयति स्त्रीणां कुत्सु इति कुट्टनी ।  
Kutta, Preface, p. 5.

4. कुट्टनीं हयसि लये ।  
Amarakosa, II.VI, v. 19, p. 193.

5. Kutta, Preface, p. 6.

Chaturbhānī also<sup>1</sup> Ksemendra compares a procuress with Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva as like Brahmā her advice was valuable, like Viṣṇu she was deemed to know everything, and like Śiva she brought destruction to poor paramours<sup>2</sup>. Her importance for a courtesan was greatly emphasised by him<sup>3</sup>.

The numerous references to courtesans suggest that a section of women adopted the career of courtesans. Their recognition as a separate caste by the Skanda Purāṇa<sup>4</sup> proves that by the early medieval period they had become a distinct class in society. It may be added that the feudatory system became more and more popular in this period<sup>5</sup> and with the growth of feudal aristocracy the class of courtesans expanded in society. The kings and the nobility had been the greatest patronisers of courtesans. They were invited on auspicious occasions and used to discharge some important duties, besides giving dance performance etc. It seems that the kings tolerated, rather welcomed them due to their own selfish motives, as, besides giving

1. कृद्विम्बश्चतुरक्या मन्त्रवरीणाः

Chaturbhānī, Ed. Motichandra, p. 258.

2. वैश्वीकदेशविशये चतुराननत्वा-

-म्यायाप्रपन्ननिन्दयेन कार्पण्यत्वात् ।

रिक्ताग्रजकलैरतिमैरत्वात्

सर्गस्थितिद्वयविधातुमुणा त्वमेव ॥

Kalavilāsa, IV, v. 11.

3. Samayamātrikā, I, vs. 41-44.

4. Supra, p. 164. 169.

5. B.N.S. Yadava, Secular Land Grants of the Post-Gupta Period And Some Aspect of the Growth of Feudal Complex in Northern India; Land System And Feudalism In Ancient India, Ed. D.C. Sircar, p. 84.

feasts to their eyes, they were also the source of income to the kingdom. Alberuni clearly says: "he kings make them an attraction for their cities, a bait of pleasure for their subjects, for no other but financial reasons. By the revenues which they derive from the business both as fines and taxes, they want to recover the expenses which their treasury has to spend on the army"<sup>1</sup>. That the (Dasabandha) prostitutes had to pay some tax<sup>(Dasabandha)</sup> is also proved by a Chāhamāna inscription of twelfth century<sup>2</sup>. Perhaps king Kumāravāla was also lured by this idea of monetary profit when he agreed to tolerate prostitutes in his kingdom<sup>3</sup>. When the tax began to be realised from the courtesans is not definitely known, but this much is ~~certain~~<sup>known</sup> from the Arthasastra of Kautilya that they had to pay some taxes<sup>4</sup>. ~~Therefore, it must have been realised in the times of Kautilya (300 B.C. - 100 A.D.).~~ Sometimes the ganikās were also entrusted with confidential and important work<sup>5</sup> and were employed as spies<sup>5</sup>.

In Sanskrit literature much has been said about their characteristics, habits, qualities, and mode of their life and the people are warned to be away from them. It is well-known that the courtesans were money-minded, their first and foremost aim was to gain money<sup>6</sup> and so naturally only the rich men were

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1. Sachau, Vol. II, p. 157.

2. A.S.I.A.R., 1908-9, p. 119.

3. "व्यापकं तु वरकामुपेक्षणाय न तेन किञ्चिदुक्तं स्थितं वा"  
Moharajaparajaya, p. 83.

4. Arthasastra, 125.12, 243.11

5. R.B. Singh, The History of the Chāhamānas, Ch. XII, p. 351.

6. Kutta, v. 277.

their targets. In the Kuttanīmatam the procuress advises them not to please those who were poor and one who did so was ridiculed.<sup>1</sup> They were advised to have connection with as many rich persons as possible. There was no definite and fixed amount of their fee. It depended on the financial status of the paramours. Besides cash, sometimes the Uttariya was also given to them<sup>2</sup>. They denied to do anything without being paid<sup>3</sup>. About their nature Hemacandra says that they say one thing and think <sup>of</sup> another<sup>4</sup>.

Various similies have been used in explaining their habits and qualities. ~~etc.~~ It is said that they are charming and beautiful and give <sup>great</sup> ~~highest~~ pleasure to men through their art, and men are enchanted by their sweet and beautiful talk. In this regard they are likened to the poets who attract the audience by their beautiful poems and <sup>attractive</sup> ~~seducing~~ voice<sup>5</sup>. They are also compared with kings, scribes, women, children, ascetics, thieves, merchants,

1. Ibid, v. 278.

2. Ibid, v. 344.

3. "Like a courtesan, you never glance even at a friend even though sick, even though asking, unless you are paid,"

T.S.P., Vol. I, p. 53.

4. Ibid, p. 89.

5. सारंकारत्या विभक्तिरु विरञ्जया, विज्ञानया

वज्ञा, सावरचर्चणा रसवती, मुग्धाऽर्चयिता परम् ।

वाच्यवर्णितवर्णनान्वयवात्स्वदप्रतीतिर्दिता

वेद्या सत्कविमारीष हरति प्रीडा कलाशालिनी ॥

Kaemendra, Samayanātrkā, Epilogue, v.I.

gamblers, selfish persons, physicians, astrologers, gold smiths, <sup>hunters</sup> hunting, actresses, servants, cows, serpents, bees, birds, forests, fire, flowers, stones, boxes, lamps, poets, goddess of fortune, yama etc.<sup>1</sup>

But there were good points also in their favour. They knew sixty four arts and some of them were very learned and intelligent and could solve difficult problems<sup>2</sup>.

~~A review of the above account reveals that~~ <sup>the</sup> courtesans occupied a fairly high position in the eye of the ruling aristocracy, but the ascetic and orthodox view always condemned them and the people in general did not have good opinion about their profession, nature and activities. The evidence of ~~the~~ Kathākoṣaprakaraṇa clearly reveals that a large number of them were drawn from the lower classes of society, so they could not receive favourable consideration from the people, although they were <sup>a</sup> source of enjoyment to them.

### Devadāsīs

Another reprehensible institution that gained momentum in this period, was that of temple dancers or devadāsīs. Nothing can be said with certainty about its origin. <sup>the</sup> Devadāsīs were dedicated to the temples. They had to please gods by their songs and dance. They used to live in the temples. When the Paurāṇic religions gained popularity in India, the worship of <sup>gods</sup> Lord Viṣṇu, Śiva and their consorts were performed with great enthusiasm. It was felt

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1. Sternbach, Gaṇikāvṛtta Saṁgraha, pp. 143-149.

2. Supra, Ch. I, pp. <sup>47-8.</sup> 43-44.

that, besides propitiating and worship, the gods also need<sup>ed</sup> some type of recreation. Probably the employment of the devadāsīs in the temples was an outcome of this tendency.

Most of the devadāsīs, it may be pointed out belonged to the class of prostitutes<sup>1</sup>. But there were some other unfortunate girls, who being the victims of superstitious parents were cast away and were usually adopted by the temple authorities and were trained as devadāsīs. Sometimes childless parents took a vow to offer their first child, if she be a girl, to the temple. Likewise a fifth girl and one who was born at an inauspicious moment or who had some particular marks indicating evil, were considered the cause of ruin to the family. These girls were presented to the gods by their parents as they believed that the gods would turn their evil influences into good ones<sup>2</sup>.

The fact that the institution of devadāsīs existed in ancient India, is confirmed by their innumerable references in the literature and inscriptions. The Skanda Purāṇa clearly tells about the institution<sup>3</sup>. The Skanda Purāṇa must have been written

1. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, Ch. VI, p. 183.

2. P. Thomas, Indian Women Through The Ages, p. 238.

3. प्रत्यक्षात् नृपतिर्लोके देवकन्यकाः ।  
वरुणाद्रिपत्नीं कुर्वन्तो वरुणीभ्यः ॥  
राणां कपिमुखा जातो मन्त्रिभिर्योषिता नृपः ।  
प्रत्यर्प्य तां पुत्रवान्वाः प्रादावरुणाभ्युते ॥  
तत्तत्वारुमुखा जातः प्रासादावरुणीति ॥

Skanda Purāṇa, VI, 54-6.

मया च ह्यमुष्यर्ष्यं कृतान्वाहतिभ्यः ।

सप्त कृषा वरुणीः पुत्रार्थं विनियोजिताः ॥

Ibid, VI, 136.

सौम्यशालिनीरात्र्य परिवार वरुणिनाः ।

सैवार्थं शोणनाम्न्य दत्त्वा दोषदंतेः ॥

Ibid, XXIV, 12.

between the ninth and the thirteenth centuries. As such it may be said that by this time the institution of devadāsīs was well established in India. Other literary sources also support the above view. An interesting incident narrated by Kalhana, suggests that the devadāsī system was firmly established in Kashmir. It says that king Pratāpāditya was put in an embarrassing situation and could not decide whether as a king it ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> proper for him to take away the wife of <sup>or the</sup> his subordinate <sup>person</sup>. But the husband took the decision and told the king that he would offer his wife as a devadāsī to the temple and then it would be easier for the king to take her back from the temple<sup>1</sup>. It indicates that even married ladies might be employed as dancing girls in the temples. Another reference also throws some light on the devadāsī system. In a lonely forest king Lalitāditya noticed at a distance that the two women were dancing and singing. On being enquired by him they said that they were devadāsīs and by the order of their mothers they came there to dance daily. Such was the tradition of their family. When that particular spot was dug the king found the ruins of two temples inside the earth. It seems that the temple dancers of their family ~~must~~ <sup>may</sup> have been employed in those temples and to continue that tradition these two women were also dancing on the same site, although the temples <sup>had</sup> ~~ceased~~ to exist<sup>2</sup>. King Utkarṣa, who ruled over Kashmir in the later half

1. एकमुखाऽपिनादत्ते तां वदत्ता दुरास्वबाह । गृह्यतां नर्तकी भूत्वा नृपज्ञत्वान्मया-  
पिता ॥

Rāj., IV, 36.

2. दुराग्रिमांशुने तत्र स्त्रियां ललिताकुलिम् । एकां वदत्तं गायन्तीं नृत्यन्तीमपरामपि ॥  
तुर्गं तं स्मारकं तत्रानन्ददिने दिने । दृष्ट्वा तस्य ते कान्ते नत्वा पञ्चदशविंशत्य-  
तनुवृत्ते नर्तन्यावावां देवगुहाभिते । यः शूरवर्जमानो यं ग्रामस्तत्रावधौर्गुणम् ॥  
इहत्येवैकमुखां पातुणामुपदेष्टः । अस्मात् कुले नियतं नृपमत्र विधीयते ॥

Ibid., IV, 266-70.



of the eleventh century, took a temple dancer into his harem and made her his chief queen<sup>1</sup>.

The evidences of the Pavanadūtām (12th cen. A.D.) and the Rāmacarita (12th cen. A.D.) prove that the devadāsīs were employed in the temples of Bengal also<sup>2</sup>. <sup>the</sup> Jaina temples too, as is evident from the Apabhraṃśa-Kāvyaṭreyī, had singing girls. The religious atmosphere of the temples was being sullied due to the visits of the men who thought it better to have a glimpse of these lovely girls than to have a 'darsana' of the deity. It was due to this fact that Jinadatta Sūri was perturbed over this practice and wanted to do away with it. He says that the places of worship had become the places of kāmādhyaṣasāya instead of dharmādhya-vasāya<sup>3</sup>.

The Chinese pilgrims of the seventh century also refer to this custom. Hiuen-Tsang in his travelogue of India speaks of the singing girls whom he saw in a Sun temple of Mon-Lo-San-Pu-Lu<sup>4</sup> (Multan). Itsing refers to the maidens who used to dance before the Buddhist deities<sup>5</sup>. The Arab travellers also had the

1. Ibid., VIII, 858.

2. Pavanadūtām, v. 28, Rāmacarita, III, v. 37.

3. Apabhraṃśa-Kāvyaṭrayī, Upadeśasāyanarāsa (Com. on v. 34, p. 46).

4. Watters on Yuan Chwang, Vol. II, Ch. XVI, p. 254,

Des femmes font entendre tour a tour une musique harmonieuse  
Julien, Memoires Sur les Contrees occidentales, Tome II, p. 173.

5. Takakusu, p. 147.

opportunity of seeing such temples where the singing girls were kept for the service of the gods. Muqaddasi who came to India in the tenth century A.D. writes that such temples were in Sindha also<sup>1</sup>. According to Ibn-Asir there were some five hundred dancing girls in the glorious temple of Somanātha<sup>2</sup>. He also says that some remuneration was given to them<sup>3</sup>. Alberuni in his visit to India, marked the dissatisfaction of the Brāhmanas about the devadāsīs, but, as he pointed out, their resentment could not bear any fruit and the institution progressed rapidly<sup>4</sup>.

Several inscriptions of this period also attest to the presence of devadāsīs in the temples of India. The Vasantagarh inscription of Varmalāta (C. 624 A.D.) refers to Rūtā who was the devadāsī of the temple of Śrī-Mātā<sup>5</sup>. The Tejapura grant (9th cen. A.D.) also speaks of the dancing girls attached to the temples<sup>6</sup>. An inscription of the Chāhamāna ruler Vighraharāja II (V.S. 1030) says that many girls were presented to the Harṣanātha temple<sup>7</sup>. Two inscriptions of Jojladēva (C. 1090 A.D.) speak of

1. Nadvī, Arab Aur Bhārata Ke Sambandha, p. 175.

2. There were also three hundred musicians and five hundred dancing girls attached to it and it was customary even for the kings and rājas of India to send their daughters for the service of the temple; Elliot, H.I., Vol. II, p. 472.

3. A salary was fixed for everyone of the attendants and it was duly and punctually paid. Ibid, p. 472.

4. Sachau, Vol. II, p. 157.

5. E.I., Vol. IX, p. 191.

6. J.A.S.B., Vol. IX, 1840, p. 766 ff.

7.

an order of the king that on the occasion of a festival concerning any particular god, all the devadāsīs attached to the temples of other gods, attired in their best dress and ornaments, should give their best performance of dance and music. ~~and~~ The king even directed his descendants and other princes to see that this tradition should be continued and anybody who would meddle with this practice, should be dealt with firmly by the ruler.<sup>1</sup> An inscription of the Chāhamāna king Alhana (V.S. 1205-1148 A.D.) informs that the temples of Chapālesvara and Tripurusaḍeva had many devadāsīs and various rulers made arrangement for them.<sup>2</sup> The Devapārā prasasti of king Vijayasena of Bengal (C. 1097-1158 A.D.) says that the king presented one hundred girls to his temple<sup>3</sup>. An inscription of the Somavamsī king Karṇa proves the presence of dancing girls in the Buddhist temples also. It tells us that the king granted a village in favour of Rānī Karpūrasrī. She is referred to as a daughter and grand daughter of Mahārī Mahūnadevī and Udayamatī respectively. The mention of her lineage from the

1. यत्र दिने यत्र देवे यात्रा भवति तत्रापत्यमस्तद्वि-

-वानां सत्कृत्याकुले सर्व्वैः साकल्पैः सुवस्त्रैर्विभाव-

-दिमश्वागत्य वापनृत्यगानादिविधि (न) । यात्रा कर्णीयाऽग्रे

-व सर्व्वकालमस्य श्रेयस्तेषां माविमुष्मिपालैरित्यं

----- विधावान्वाऽपरीपि यी कर्णीपायं कुरुते तस्य

-- (नि) गृहः कर्णीयः ।

Sādāḍī Inscriptions of Jojaladeva (V.S. 1147),

E.I., Vol. XI, pp. 27-8. The Nāḍol Inscription also has the same wordings with some alteration.

2. Dashrath Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, Appendix G(111), pp. 181-2.

3. E.I., Vol. I, pp. 310-24.

females instead of the males may be taken to mean that probably she was a harlot born of courtesan. The title Mahārī of her mother also supports the above view as the meaning of the title is devadāsī. The mention of the 'mahāvihāra' suggests that the <sup>rārī</sup> ~~queen~~ and her mother were devadāsīs ~~maintained~~ in the Buddhist temples. She might have been bought by the king from the mahāvihāra at Solonapura as the inscription speaks of her as 'Solonapura mahāvihāra-vinirgata'<sup>1</sup>. King Karna was ruling over Orissa in the twelfth century, so it may be said that at least in his times the Buddhist temples were not exception with regard to the employment of temple dancers.

One of the inscriptions of Chola king Rājarāja I (C. 985-1014 A.D.) says that the Tanjore temple had four hundred devadāsīs. The king granted some land for the maintenance of each of them<sup>2</sup>. It is evident from this <sup>record</sup> ~~inscription~~ that the temples of South India also had bevy of devadāsīs.

Thus, it is clear that the custom of attaching girls to the temples was fully in vogue in our period, and ~~the large~~ number of women had to adopt this career reluctantly. The spiritual and pious atmosphere of the temples, it may be added,

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1. The views of D.C. Sircar on Ratnagiri Copper Plate Inscription, E.I., Vol. XXXV, p. 97.
  2. Ins. of Rājarāja, no. 66;  
S.I.I., Ed. Hultzah, p. 259.

was being sullied due to the presence of these temple-dancers. Their activities in the famous Visvanātha temple of Vārāṇasī, as described by Dāmodaragupta in the *Kuṭṭanīmatam*<sup>1</sup>, ~~clearly proves~~ <sup>has not</sup> the ~~truthfulness~~ <sup>same</sup> of the above statement. The view of Jinadatta Sūri that the places of worship had become the places of Kāmādhyaśāya<sup>2</sup>, is also worth noting in this regard. This trend of the time shocked the conscientious persons and they raised a voice of protest against this custom, as is evident from the testimony of Alberuni<sup>3</sup>. But theirs was the cry in wilderness, as the all powerful kings were in favour of such a custom.

Lastly, it would not be improper to point out that the custom of presenting girls to the temples, was not only the peculiarity of Hindu religion and society, but other ancient religions, such as those of Babylon, Greece and Egypt also gave shelter to temple dancers<sup>4</sup>.

#### Chauri-bearers, Parasol-bearers and Hotel-carriers

Some women, most probably of the lower classes, used to be engaged in the royal courts for the personal services of the kings. Some of them were chauri-bearers, some used to hold parasol, while others used to serve betels to the kings, queens and the princesses. <sup>Sometimes</sup> ~~Usually~~ courtesans were employed for such

1. *Kuṭṭa*, vs. 743-56.

2. *Supra*, pp. 182

3. *Supra*, p. 183.

4. A.S. Altekar, *The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation*, ~~Chennai~~, pp. 184-5.

works and, besides performing their duties, they used to provide entertainment by their dance and song. But as already pointed out some women other than the courtesans, also took up these careers.

Bāṇa refers to the chaurī-bearer of king Harṣa<sup>1</sup>. Patralatā<sup>2</sup> and Makarika<sup>3</sup> were the betel-carriers of princess Rājyaśrī and queen Vilāsavatī respectively. The Viddhaśālabhañjika<sup>4</sup> and the Karpūramañjarī<sup>5</sup> of Rājasekhara (10th cen. A.D.), the Navasāhasāṅkacarita<sup>6</sup> of Parimala or Padmagupta, ~~that~~ deals with the story of king Muñjavof Mālwa (C. 974-97 A.D.), the Karakaṇḍacariu<sup>7</sup> of Munī Kanakāmarī (C. 1065 A.D.), the Trisaṣṭiśālākā-puruṣacarita<sup>8</sup> and the Kumārapālacarita<sup>9</sup> of Hemacandra (C. 1089-1173 A.D.), the Nalavilāsa<sup>10</sup> of Rāmacandra Sūri (C. 1093-1174 A.D.) and the Prabandhakosa<sup>11</sup> of Rājasekhara Sūri (C. 1405 A.D.) are some of the literary works which speak of the employment of women as chaurī and betel bearers.

The appearance of chaurī-bearers among the sculptures *of* ~~carved on~~ the temples of Khajurāho proves that they were indispensable part of the royal palace life<sup>12</sup>.

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1. H.C. Tr. Cowell, Ch. VIII, p. 254.
  2. Ibid, p. 401.
  3. Kādambarī, p. 123.
  4. Viddha, Act I, p. 22.
  5. Karp., Act IV, p. 277.
  6. N.C., Canto II, v. 40.
  7. K.C., Ch. VII, 11, p. 67.
  8. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 184; Ch. V, p. 278.
  9. K.C., Canto VI, v. 29.
  10. Nalavilāsa, Act II, p. 21.
  11. P.K. Hemasūriprabandha, p. 50.
  12. Some of the sculptures on the Neminātha and the Kāṇḍariyā Mahādeva temples depict chaurī-bearers.

Pratīhārī

A study of the literature and the art reveals to us that some women used to adopt the career of a Pratīhārī or door-guardian. They used to guard the palace as well as the antahpura or the inner apartment. Their work was to inform their masters or mistresses about the visitors and the purpose of their visit. Bāṇa<sup>1</sup> refers to their services in the royal courts. According to him, the pratīhārī used to hold a sword and a 'vetra' or 'rājadaṇḍa' which was symbolic of her authority<sup>2</sup>. He also tells that there used to be a chief of the lady door keepers, who was called 'Mahattarikā'. Kulavardhana held this position in the inner apartment of king Tārāpīḍa<sup>3</sup>. Some of the dramas of this period which relates the royal life, also include pratīhārī in their lady characters<sup>4</sup>.

Some of the sculptures of South India represent female door keepers. In one of the sculptures of the Pallava Mamalla (C. 640-74 A.D.) two female-guardians are depicted as guarding the doorway of the Draupadī Ratha<sup>5</sup> (C. 753-83 A.D.). The Kailāsa

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1. H.C., Ch. V, p. 243; Kādambarī, pp. 15, 133.

2. जामदग्न्यमश्रुगरीष वली कृतकलराजमण्डला, विन्ध्यवनमुपमिरिष वैश्रुतायती,  
राज्याभिषेकतैव किमुलिङ्गी, प्रतीहारी समुपसृत्य पितितलनिहितानुकरकला  
सक्वियमश्रुवीतु ।

Kādambarī, p. 15.

3. Ibid, p. 133.

4. Priya, Act IV, pp. 92-3; Ratna, Act IV, p. 168; M.M., Act II, p. 100.

5. A. Goswami, The Art of the Pallavas, plate 8, p. 15.



temple, built in the Hāstrakūṭa period shows a female and a male door-keeper side by side<sup>1</sup>. The pratihārīs are also included in the sculptures of Khajurāho which represent almost every <sup>important</sup> aspect of <sup>society</sup> life. Women door-guardians, as depicted on the Jaina temples, bear arms, chaurī, pitchers and cocoanuts<sup>2</sup>.

### Nurse (Dhāva)

The career of a nurse, it appears, was adopted by the ordinary and low-class women. The royal and aristocratic families used to engage them for the upbringing of their children. The Rājataranginī of Kalhaṇa says that Dhoja was carefully brought <sup>up</sup> by Nona<sup>3</sup>. Kalhaṇa speaks highly of her qualities of head and heart<sup>4</sup>. The Dasakumāracarita of Dandī<sup>5</sup>, the Mālatīmādhavam of Bhavabhūti<sup>6</sup>, and the Viddhasālābhāṅjikā of Rājasekhara<sup>7</sup>, <sup>and</sup> the Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacarita<sup>8</sup> and the Kumārāpālacarita<sup>9</sup> of Hemacandra also refer to them.

1. A. Goswami, India Temple Sculpture, plate 31.

2. The Neminātha and Śīṭalanātha temples are noteworthy in this connection.

3. ---- यात्रो नौनामिषानां -----

मृतेन पित्रामात्रा च हीनं तन्मुयात्मा । मातुलं ययात्रामोक्षेयं माननीयम् ॥

Rāj., VIII, 3061-2.

4. Ibid., 3063-7.

5. D.C., <sup>E</sup>arlier <sup>P</sup>art, Uch. I, pp. 25, 31, 36; <sup>L</sup>ater <sup>P</sup>art, Uch. II, p. 192.

6. M.M., Act I, p. 28.

7. Viddha, Act III, p. 68.

8. T.S.P., Vol. II, Ch. III, p. 67.

9. A.C., Canto III, v. 36.

Dūtī

Some women were employed to carry the messages for the accomplishment of secret and important works. It seems that they were not employed for this sole purpose, in fact the female slaves were made to do this job. Some of the references noted below would ~~be able to~~ show the nature of their duties. It is said in the *Daśakumāracarita* that Kāmamañjarī, a courtesan, had many dūtīs and Dharmaraksitā was chief among them<sup>1</sup>. The *Uttara Purāṇa* of Guṇabhadra<sup>2</sup> and the *Kathāsaritsāgara* of Somadeva<sup>3</sup> reveal that the kings used to send their messages through them.

Dāsīs And Maid-Servants

The institution of slavery dates back to very early times, not only in India, but in other parts of the world also. The female slaves were also kept along with the male ones. In this period we find an increase in the number of female slaves and a deterioration in their position<sup>4</sup>. Though the emergence of the feudal tendencies during the early medieval period has been associated with the decline of slavery, yet the domestic slavery continued to flourish among the landed aristocracy. One of the purposes of the feudal attacks and raids was, besides other things, to acquire female slaves, ~~also~~. It is said in two of the documents of the *Lekhapaddhati* (V.S. 1288) that the girls were brought from

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1. D.C., later part, Uch. II, p. 175.

2. *Uttara Purāṇa*, parva 68, vs. 321-2.

3. O.S., Vol. IX, Ch. CXXIV, p. 72.

4. Lallanji Gopal, *The Economic Life of the Northern India*,

~~Ch. III~~, p. 71.

the captured states and were sold as slaves<sup>1</sup>. Perhaps this practice was fairly prevalent as out of the four documents concerning female slaves, two testify to this practice.

The general economic condition of the masses deteriorated to a considerable extent<sup>2</sup> and it also contributed to the increase of slaves in this period. There were also famines and the victims of this natural calamity had to accept slavery for their maintenance. One of the documents of the Lekhapaddhati says that a destitute girl first adopted beggary, but could not support herself and ultimately accepted slavery<sup>3</sup>.

The catuspatha was chosen as a market<sup>place</sup> for the sale of the female slaves. It is stated in the Dasakumāracarita that Ratnavatī bought a slave girl from such a place and made her to carry the load<sup>4</sup>. A detailed account of the sale-deed is given in the Lekhapaddhati, one of the documents says that Pamuti was brought by Rāṇā Śrī Pratāpasimha from a subdued state, and after the consultation of the Pañcamukhanagara, she was sold to a man who paid 504 Viśalapriya drammaś to the Rāṇā. After that the news of purchase was proclaimed in the whole town. A contract was made to the effect that the girl would perform all the enumerated duties sincerely and the buyer would give food and clothing according to his capacity. It was also stated that if any member of her family would intervene in her work, the master

1. L.P., pp. 44-5.

2. Lallanji Gopal, The Economic Life of the Northern India, Ch. III, p. 73.

3. L.P., Svayamgatadasipatravidhi, p. 47.

4. रत्नवती तु मार्गं कञ्चित्पण्यदासीं संगृह्य तया ह्यमानपाश्यावपस्करां हेतुमुत्तमम् ।

D.C., later part, Uch. VI, p. 364.

could impart punishment to her, but if due to the cruel attitude of the master the girl committed suicide, she would be born as a she-ass, bitch or chāṇḍālī in the next birth. The employer was also directed to bathe in the holy Ganges and thus he would be able <sup>to get rid</sup> of his sin. It was for the Rakṣāpāla and the citizens to see that the abovementioned clauses were fulfilled. The document was to bear the signatures of the Rakṣāpāla and the Rānā<sup>1</sup>.

Another model document tells us that many girls were brought from Mahārāstra by Rāṇakaśrīvīradhavaladeva. But the names of these girls and their purchasers are not given in this document. It is also stated that the girls were sold through the agency of an agent for sixty dramma, then the document recorded the duties to be performed by these slave-girls.

(This document differs from the first one in as much as instead of giving the names of the Rakṣapālas it mentions some private persons as the witnesses of the deed. Another thing that strikes the mind was the fact that the Pañcamukhanagaras were not informed about the sale. This was perhaps due to the fact that the sale was not done at a public place<sup>2</sup>.

The other two documents provide altogether different and interesting information. One of them reveals that Sampurī, a ten year old girl became orphan due to a famine. She began to beg alms at every door, but finding it not sufficient for <sup>her</sup> ~~the~~ maintenance, <sup>she</sup> had to offer herself as a slave at every house. A Chāhaḍa

1. L.P., Dāsīpatravīdhi, p. 44.

2. Ibid., p. 45.

accepted her as his slave before the gathering of the men of four castes. Still he made her to say that in case of her being disloyal to any member of his family, he could inflict corporal punishment on her, and even in the case of her death by excessive beating, no fault could be attached to the master. If she would end her life voluntarily, then also no blame could be found with him. In such an eventuality the master would have only to take bath in the Ganges<sup>1</sup>. The fourth document speaks of more or less the same things<sup>2</sup>. The Likhanāvalī of Vidyapati of Mithila, a later work which contains the traditions of the early medieval period, also refers to the sale, purchase and mortgage of the female slaves<sup>3</sup>. It would not be improper to add here that the slave girls could only be acquired through written contract<sup>4</sup>.

The duties of the slave girls are enumerated in the Uktivyaktiprakarana, a work of the (Twelfth) century, which throws some light on the society of the Gāhaḍavāla age. According to it, their household duties were to fetch water, to clean utensils and to sweep and clean the house<sup>5</sup>. The documents of the

1. Ibid, pp. 45-7.

2. Ibid.

3. Likhanāvalī, Ed. I.K. Jha, pp. 91 ff.

4. A.K. Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, ~~Ch. XVI~~, p. 348.

5. पाणि पद

Ukti, 31, p. 49.

पार्ल मां

Ibid, 15, p. 50.

वाडणि वाडि दासि क्लवार फेड

Ibid, 31, p. 39.

Lekhapaddhati also contain the list of duties to be performed by the female slaves. The list includes - cutting (vegetables), pulverizing (the spices), cooking, smearing the floor, bringing fuel, milking the cow, buffalo and goat, churning the curd, bringing grass, weeding and cutting grass from the field and other household work (grhakarma), threshing, cultivation and cleaning the gutters. The throwing away of human excreta of the master's family ~~was~~<sup>is</sup> also included in the list<sup>1</sup>.

Medhatithi<sup>2</sup> (c. 900 A.D.) and Kulluka<sup>3</sup> (c. 1150-1300 A.D.) were of the view that ~~the~~ female slaves of the kings<sup>4</sup> should see to the personal comforts of the kings. As regards their subsistence, both agreed with Manu that the king should fix the daily allowances of the female as well as male slaves on the basis of the nature of work<sup>4</sup>.

The condition of the slave girls was pitiable. They had to be the toys in the hands of their masters. They could not raise voice against the ill-treatment, nay, they could die due to the excessive corporal beating, but still their masters were considered flawless and all the blames went to the victims<sup>5</sup>.

1. L.P., pp. 44-7.

2. Medh. on Manu, VII, 125, 219, 224.

3. Kulluka on Manu, VII, 224.

4. Medh. on Manu, VII, 125.

स्त्रीणां दास्यादीनां कर्मकाजस्य बीतकृष्टमध्यमापकृष्टस्यान्योन्यानुत्पेक्षया  
प्रत्यहं कर्तव्यं कृतिं कुर्यात् ।

Kulluka on Manu, VII, 125.

5. Supra, p. 188. 113.

They were considered as chattel and could be presented as gift, could be sent to other countries, and also could be mortgaged<sup>1</sup>. They were viewed with disdainful eye. The ~~remark~~<sup>expression</sup> 'son or daughter of a slave-girl' was often contemptuously used<sup>2</sup>. In view of the maltreatment meted out to them we may agree with Mahula Samkṛtyayana that the slave-girls were regarded as sub-human beings<sup>3</sup>.

It appears that it was customary with the kings, queens and princesses to keep female-slaves. The Priyadarśikā and Ratnavallī of king Harṣa (7th cen. A.D.), Padma Purāṇa of Raviṣeṇa<sup>4</sup> (678 A.D.), Uttarapurāṇa of Guṇabhadra<sup>5</sup> (9th cen. A.D.), Karpūramañjarī<sup>6</sup> and Viddhasālābhāṅjikā<sup>7</sup> of Rājasekhara (10th cen. A.D.), Karnasundarī of Bilhana<sup>8</sup> (11th cen. A.D.), Kathākoṣaprakaraṇa of Jineśvara Sūri<sup>9</sup> (C. 1051 A.D.), Kathāsaritsāgara of Somadeva<sup>10</sup> (C. 1063-81 A.D.), Triṣaṣṭiśālākāpuruṣacarita of Hemacandra<sup>11</sup> (C. 1089-1173 A.D.) and the Prabandhakōśa of Rājasekhara Sūri<sup>12</sup> (C.1405 A.D.)

1. L.P., p. 47.

2. Karp., pp. 22, 31, 156; Samayamātrkā, VIII, v. 18.

3. Hindi Kāvya Dhārā, p. 17.

4. Padma Purāṇa, Part I, parva 5, v. 41, part II, parva 49, v. 45.

5. Uttara Purāṇa, parva 63, vs. 172-3, parva 75, vs. 349, 351.

6. Karp., Act IV, p. 278.

7. Viddha., Act II, p. 33; Act III, p. 56.

8. Karnasundarī, Act III, p. 37.

9. K.P., Siṃhakumārakathānakam, p. 48.

10. O.S., Vol. VII, Ch. LXXXVIII, p. 36; Ch. LXXXIX, p. 44; Ch. XCIV, pp. 89-90; Vol. IX, Ch. CXXI, p. 12; Ch. CXXII, p. 41; Ch. CXXIV, pp. 72, 78, 80, 81, 85.

11. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 146; Ch. IV, p. 265.

12. P.K., Sātavāhanaprabandha, p. 72; Abhadraprabandha, p. 100; Bappabhattasūripṛabandha, p. 44; Harṣakaviprabandha, p. 56.



are some of the literary works which speak of dāsīs.

As regards the maid-servants, it may be said that they were employed by the rich families for the household works. A reference in the Rājtarāṅgiṇī says that a woman had to maintain herself by doing the job of maid-servant in other people's houses<sup>1</sup>. Their duties according to Hemacandra, were : threshing, grinding, carrying water, sweeping the house, smearing the house with cowdung etc.<sup>2</sup> It would appear that the duties of the slave-girls and the maid-servants were almost the same but it may be pointed out that the slave-girls had to do impure work of throwing the human excreta also, while the maid-servant ~~was~~ <sup>were</sup> not expected to do it<sup>3</sup>.

#### Women-Labourers

Some women, of course, of the low castes, were also employed as labourers. It is said in the Rāsmālā that king Siddharāja of Gujarat engaged some labourers for the digging of a tank. Among them there was a woman named Jasmā who was of a low origin<sup>4</sup>. The same source also informs us that some wages were to be paid to them, but the amount of payment is not given.

#### Weavers <sup>or</sup> And Other Technical Workers

Some women knew the art of weaving and used to be benefitted by it, if need arose. Medhatithi (c. 900 A.D.) says that the

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1. वन्धितता मया साध्वी स्ववर्द्धदुःखेन सा । विकण्ठिता जीवती प्रथ्यात्मानन्दवैभवा

Rāj. VI, 21.

2. T.S.P., Vol. III, p. 248.

3. A.K. Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, Ch. ~~III~~, p. 348.

4. A.K. Forbes, Rāsmālā, Ch. VII, pp. 111-2.

widows used to earn their livelihood by spinning<sup>1</sup>. The evidence of <sup>in</sup>Dayabhāga suggests that some married women too used to take to spinning, weaving and other technical arts and thus augmented the family income<sup>2</sup>.

### Women And Politics

#### Their Role In Administration

In the annals of history we find such remarkable queens who very ably administered kingdoms in their own rights. ~~the~~ ~~history of our period is an index to this fact.~~ The 'Si-yu-ki', a ~~great~~ work of the well-known Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen-Tsang, informs us that to the north of the Brahmapura country in the present Kumaon-Garhwal region in the Himalayas "was the Suvarṇagotra country..... This was the Eastern woman's country, so-called because it was ruled by a succession of women. The husband of the queen was king; but he did not administer the government. The men attended only to the suppression of revolts and cultivation of fields<sup>3</sup>". Hiuen-Tsang also speaks of another Strīrājya, 'The <sup>West</sup> <sup>Woman</sup> country<sup>4</sup>, which was near Laṅkara in the Baluchistan region. Some women of these two Strīrājyas exercised power in the political field.

In the Bhaumakara dynasty of ancient Orissa (9th cen. A.D. many queens ascended the throne on different occasions.

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1. Medh. on Manu, V, 157;

<sup>1</sup>Supra, Ch. I, p. 45.

2. Dāya, Ed. Colebrooke, p. 85.

3. Watters on Yuan Chwang, Vol. II, p. 330.

4. Ibid, Vol. II, pp. 257-8.

"tribhuvana-mahādevī I, the queen of king Lalitabhāra adorned the throne for some years during the minority of her grandson. She was the daughter of a southern Nāga Chief, Rājamalla. It seems that she assumed the name of Gosvāminī after the famous queen of ancient Crissa. She ~~was~~ <sup>ruled</sup> ~~ruling~~ the kingdom in her own rights and is described as 'Mahārājādhirāja Parmesvarī Śrī Tribhuvana-mahādevī' in an inscription. This inscription tells us that after the death of king Lalitabhāra, the feudatories requested his queen to ascend the throne. She accepted the request and ascended the lion-throne like Kātyāyini<sup>1</sup>. Tribhuvana-mahādevī II, the wife of king Subhākara IV, adorned the throne after king Śivākara III, the younger brother of her husband. Prithvī-mahādevī was her real name, and she was the daughter of king Svabhāvatunga of Kosala. The wife of Subhākara V, Gaurī-mahādevī, was <sup>the</sup> first among the four queens who acquired the throne successively after the death of king Subhākara V. After her death, her daughter Dandī-mahādevī became queen and ruled for about eight years. Her records bearing the dates in the year 180 and 187 of the Bhauṃakara Era have been found. These dates make us believe that she was ruling between 1011-1018 A.D. She made some grants, as is clear from the Ganjām Plates<sup>2</sup>. She

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1. "तदुनापि प्रसीद । नाप्यसुचिरं चास्यतां । श्रियतां लोकानुग्रहः स्वी श्रियतांवा प्रमागता करराज्यत्री रित्तिरममपिनेकमगलप्रतिपादिनीमुत्तम मन्त्रा महासामन्त कृष्ण निवेपमानः कात्यायिनीव सिंघनमारुडा ।"

Grant of Tribhuvana-mahādevī, J.B.O.R.S., II, pp. 422-23.

2. E.I., VI, pp. 140-42.

was succeeded by her step-mother Lakula-mahādevī, who, in turn was again succeeded by Dharma-mahādevī, the wife of Śāntikara III. She was the last known administrator of the Dhumakara dynasty. The Taitali Plate of Dharma-mahadevi informs us about these four queens.<sup>1</sup>

The Rājataranginī, a chronicle of the kings of Kashmir gives us the detailed account of the queens who ruled over Kashmir in different centuries. King Lalitāditya (c. 699-726 A.D.) came across a woman-kingdom in the Uttarāpatha, when during his conquest, after conquering all directions, he went forward towards Uttarāpatha.<sup>2</sup> The fact that king Jayāpīḍa got victory over a big woman-kingdom, proves that this kingdom was ruled by women.<sup>3</sup> After the end of the dynasty of Śaṅkaravarman people requested queen Sugandhā to take the rein of administration in

1. — कितान् यः सुनाकर इति प्रविशति यक्षार्थं (वर्ग) ॥ तस्य निमित्तं  
युधः परमेस्वरस्य देवी प्रकृतममलनतया (या) व पदम् ॥ विदितं यतिं करयित  
केर्ति (र्ति) गोरी गोरी -  
व कल्प पदविरघ्नीरुद ॥ ततो वडिडमहादेवी पुता तस्यामिनेयसी ॥  
महो महेन्नाम्याया विर -  
कालमवाप्त्यत् ॥ तस्या प्रथमममनी ततो (मुव) मवाप्त्यत् ॥ केमद-  
वसुतमहादेवी धर्मायति -  
रिवाज (व्या) ता ॥  
ततो धर्म (म्या) महादेवी महादेवी महीशः ॥ ये पुस्तकनारस्य  
मुकतत - मवाप्त्यत् ॥  
परममहादेवरी मातापितृपादागुयाता परम (म) दारिका महाराजधिराज परमेस्वरी  
ये धर्मायमहादेवी कुशतिनी

I.H.Q., Vol. XXI, 1945, pp. 218-9, lines 15-28.

2. Rāj., IV, 173.

3. Ibid, IV, 587.

her hands. She accepted their request and ruled with great ability<sup>1</sup>. Diddā was the most influential queen of Kashmir who exercised great power between c. 958-1003 A.D. She was the daughter of Simharāja the ruler of Lohara, and Ksemagupta was her husband. Diddā exercised such an influence on her husband that he was called 'Diddā-Kṣema'<sup>2</sup>. It is also corroborated by the legend 'Di-Kṣema' which appeared on his copper coins. She took great interest in the political affairs for the benefit of the kingdom.

After Ksemagupta Abhimanyu sat on the throne of his father under the guardianship of queen Diddā. She dismissed the chief minister Phalguna from his post, because he had displeased the queen by giving his daughter to Ksemagupta. The two nobles Mahiman and Pāṇala were turned out of the palace, for they were conspiring for the throne. When they organised a revolt, she bought off their Brāhmaṇa followers. <sup>Then</sup> Yaśodhara was made commander-in-chief and when he defeated Shahi king Thakkana, Diddā began to suspect his power, held him guilty for taking money in order to keep Shahi on the throne and tried to banish him for this very act. Yaśodhara was also powerful and his men raised a rebellion. but Diddā was not so coward as to accept defeat from the hands of her chief. She quickly crushed the rebellion with the help of minister Naravāhana and <sup>the</sup> Skāṅgas.

1. कश्मिरादेव इति राज्ञः संवरणः । प्रजा प्राप्येता राज्यं सुमनसा विपद्यै स्वयं ॥

Ibid., V, 243.

2. विद्वत्पतेरिति स्याति यतो सन्जायतां पुनः ।

Ibid., VI, 171.

Kāshyapa eulogises her achievement in beautiful words<sup>1</sup>. Then she conferred the title of Rājānaka on Narevāhana and made him her chief councillor. But soon the minister came in her bad books and <sup>so</sup> ~~he~~ he committed suicide. She had to be busy <sup>with</sup> ~~in~~ the rebellion <sup>of</sup> ~~of~~ Damaras. Soon she found herself helpless and unable to handle the situation. ~~Therefore~~ <sup>and</sup> she invited Phalguna to help her, <sup>but</sup> ~~But~~ this was not all, <sup>and</sup> there were more trouble <sup>in</sup> ~~in~~ store for her. At this juncture her son Abhimanyu died and his young son Nandigupta succeeded him. This gave a jolt to her and she passed her days in performing religious deeds, in constructing monasteries, temples and cities.

But she was an ambitious lady. She wanted to regain throne and glory by any means. So she applied witchcraft to kill her three grandsons - Nandigupta, Tribhuvana and Bhimagupta, and was successful in doing so. Thus she once again acquired the throne of Kashmir in  $\text{c.}$  981 A.D. This time she appointed a low-born person Tunga as her chief minister. This act of hers was enough to add fuel to the fire and other ministers revolted under the leadership of Vigraharāja - her brother's son. Diddā through her connivance won the favour of the Brāhmanas who were with Vigraharāja by giving them gold and thus defeated Vigraharāja. She selected her brother's son Sangrāmārāja of Lohara as her heir before her death which took place in  $\text{c.}$  1003 A.D. Diddā possessed great intellect and statesmanship.

Queen Suryanati was also <sup>very</sup> famous ~~as~~ ~~a~~ ~~queen~~. She was the wife of king Anantadeva, and ~~she~~ ruled in her own authority.

1. ये सप्तसप्ताद्वर्णादिनीपातनुवात्पुरा । अविजन्मुपावदन्नीडशानां महीमुजान् ॥  
वर्णवर्णं कृतापायुः श्रीररा इरीशुत्तमः । ते सिद्धं यन्निष्ठाः सर्वसाधवायाः सदा  
नुवादीन्मुपावदन्निष्ठा विदादेत्या लकीयया । वासन्निःसैवतांतीता दुर्गम मलापुराः  
Ibid., VI, 256-58.

The king was under her influence completely and except in war and hunting he used to take her advice in every matter<sup>1</sup>. It was she who saved the kingdom from the downfall by appointing able ministers like Kṣemakeśava. Kashmir became prosperous during her regime.

Jayamati also ruled in Kashmir with great success. Although she was an ordinary woman, yet she acquired the throne and maintained the glory and dignity of her status. Kindness, sweetness, sacrifice, justice, patience and the protection of the downcast are some of her qualities which made her popular among the people<sup>2</sup>. Haddādevī, the queen of king Jayasimha exercised great influence on the king. Though she actually did not rule in her own right, yet she advised the king in every important matter. The punishment and <sup>reward to</sup> ~~award of~~ other <sup>rulers</sup> ~~kings~~ were solely in her hands. The king used to take her advice in these matters<sup>3</sup>.

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1. ततः प्रभृति राज्येषु राजकायपिता पवतु । तस्यौ शौर्यकथां त्यक्त्वा राजाकार्यकरः पुनः

Ibid., VII, 199.

2. उच्छ्वा तदर्थाध्वारोहं पतुः प्रमृणातिदुर्लभम् ।  
सामान्ययापि देवीत्वं जयत्या न दुर्लभम् ॥  
सा ह्या नृक्षस्यमायुर्यत्यामसत्प्रियतान्यैः ।  
वस्तुभार्तमरित्राण मुस्यै मेध्यामनुगुणैः ॥

Ibid., VIII, 82-3.

3. स्थिरप्रसादे मुपाति मित्रहातुहो पाणात् ।  
मुमुक्षामपि संवृतावधिच्छिन्नी तदिच्छया ॥

Ibid., VIII, 3393.



In the Rajput history too, there are remarkable instances of queens who took possession of the kingdom and ruled very efficiently. Karpūradevī, the mother of Prithvirāja chāhamāna, ruled for sometime when he was a minor<sup>1</sup>. She was the daughter of a Chedi king. She administered the kingdom very ably with the help of the minister Kadambavāsa.

Kūrmādevī was another Rajput queen who displayed great wisdom in ruling the kingdom of Mevad. She fought as the leader of the army, resisted the invasion of Qutub-ud-din, when her husband Sāmarasi lost his life in the battlefield. She evinced great bravery, so characteristic of the Rajput ladies<sup>2</sup>.

Mayaṇalla or Mīnaladevī, the mother of Chaulukya king Jayasīṃha Siddharāja was a very popular queen of Gujarat. She was the daughter of king Jayakesin of the Kadamba dynasty. Her husband king Karna I died when Jayasīṃha was only a child, and the responsibility of the kingdom fell on the shoulders of Mīnaladevī. Even in sorrow, she fully realised her duties and managed the task of ruling the kingdom<sup>3</sup>. She did such noble deeds which made her memorable as a just and capable ruler. She carefully brought up the young king and when he assumed the charge of the administration, she always helped him. Siddharāja (c. 1094-1143 A.D.) was a great conqueror, administrator and

1. P.V. Canto IX, v. 1.

2. "od, Annals, Vol. I, Ed. Crooke, pp. 303-4.

3. A.K. Forbes, Rāsmālā, Ch. VII, p. 109.

builder of monuments. For all this the credit goes to Minaladevi. She did many sacred acts, one of them was the remission of the tax on pilgrims going to Somenātha<sup>1</sup>. She also constructed two lakes - Minalasar and Mālav. A tradition of Gujarat illustrates her magnanimity and justice. It is said that a courtesan lived near the lake Mālav. In order to make the surface of the lake a symmetrical one, it was necessary to demolish <sup>her</sup> the house. The courtesan was not ready to give it even for a handsome sum and she argued that she would also be famous with this lake. Minaladevi did not compel her to part with the house. There is a saying widely prevalent in Gujarat - "would you see justice, visit the Mūlav"<sup>2</sup>.

The Deccan was also not an exception in this regard, although the examples of queens who ruled over their kingdoms are few and far between. The Rājatarāṅginī tells us about queen Rattā who was ruling over Dakṣiṇāpātha during the reign of king Lalitāditya of Kashmir (C. 689-726 A.D.). It is said that like Durgā she overcame the obstacles that came in her way<sup>3</sup>.

It has been pointed out by Dr. Altekar that in the Deccan there was no dearth of queens and princesses who took active part

1. P.C. Tr. Tawney, p. 84; A.K. Forbes, Rāsmālā, p. 110.

2. A.K. Forbes, <sup>op. cit.</sup> Rāsmālā, p. 109.

3. तस्मिन्प्रसंगे रत्नाया कणाटी चटुर्दशणा ।

आपासन्पतिर्भूत्वा पुनरीर्दशणापयम् ॥

विन्ध्याद्रिमार्गः पार्श्वे निष्पन्तप्रमादया ।

दुर्गिष्व तया देव्या कृता निस्तकटकाः ॥

Rāj., IV, 152-3.

in the administration<sup>1</sup>. But it may be pointed out that some of the ~~queens and princesses~~ cited by him<sup>2</sup> in support of his statement, appear to have been jāgīr-holders who had to look after the administration of their jāgīrs; they actually did not rule their kingdoms in their own rights. This may also be said with regard to the queens mentioned in some other inscriptions<sup>3</sup>. The epigraphs acquaint us with the fact that there were also many queens, who, as a matter of fact, did not rule ~~their~~ kingdoms, but exercised considerable influence <sup>or</sup> in the political affairs of the dominions and issued grants either conjointly with the king<sup>4</sup> or independently. The Chālukya records are especially noticeable in this regard. The Gadval Plates of Vikramāditya I, the Chālukya ruler of Vātāpī (7th cen. A.D.) says that a grant of land was made by the king at the request of his queen Gaṅga-mahādevī<sup>4</sup>. The Ipur Plates of Viṣṇuwardhana III the ruler of Veṅgī, reveals that Prthvipothī, one of the queens of king Viṣṇuwardhana III

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1. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, ~~Ch. VI~~, p. 189.
  2. Ibid, p. 190;  
     Ins. of the reign of Vikramāditya V, (Śaka 932) —  
     E.I., Vol. XV, p. 76;  
     Ins. of the reign of Somesvara I, (Śaka 973) —  
     Ibid., p. 77;  
     Ins. of the reign of Vikramāditya VI (Śaka 1006) —  
     Ibid, p. 103;  
     E.I., Vol. XXII, p. 188.
  3. The Hebbala Ins. (C. 975 A.D.),  
     E.I., Vol. IV, p. 351;  
     — Lewis Rice, Mysore And Coorg From The Inscriptions, p. 73.  
     E.I., Vol. IV, p. 351.
  4. E.I., Vol. X, p. 102.

~~ruler of Vengi, reveals that Brithvinothi, one of the queens~~  
of king ~~Isanuverdhana III~~ (c. 709-746 A.D.) made a grant of  
field and the house-site to a brāhmaṇa<sup>1</sup>. It is said in the  
Lendur Plates of Kīrtivarman II, the ruler of Vātānī (A.D. 672-  
+ c. 750 A.D.) that at the request of the queen a village was  
granted to a brāhmaṇa by the king<sup>2</sup>. The Lārsūr Inscription of  
Gaṅga-mahādevī ~~saka 1030~~ (c. 1103 A.D.) tells us that she was  
the chief queen of Someśvaradeva of Talyāṇa and she gave a  
village to two temples of Śiva<sup>3</sup>. Another inscription dated  
(saka 1033-c. 1111 A.D.) says that the grant of a village was  
issued by Guṇḍa-mahādevī, the mother of Someśvaradeva<sup>4</sup>. The  
Kuruspāl Inscription records a grant of land made by Dhārāṇa-  
mahādevī, who very probably was the second queen of Someśvaradeva<sup>5</sup>.  
An inscription of the eleventh century clearly says that ~~the~~ a  
grant of land was made by Mahādevī, <sup>the</sup> queen of Chāulukya ruler  
Jayasīṃha<sup>6</sup>. The plate of Chāḍavala ruler Govindacandra and his  
queen Nayanakeli-devī (V.S. 1176-C. 1119 A.D.) says that the  
queen with the consent of the king, gave a village to the  
Purohit<sup>7</sup>.

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1. Ibid, Vol. XVIII, p. 58.

2. Ibid, Vol. IX, p. 201.

3. Ibid, Vol. IX, p. 162.

4. Ibid, p. 161.

5. Ibid, p. 163.

6. Ibid, p. 163.

7. Ibid, Vol. IV, p. 72.

Some of the Chāhamāna records also testify to the fact that the queens wielded considerable influence <sup>on</sup> ~~in~~ making grants. The Nāḍlāī Stone Inscription of Rāyapāla (c. 1132 A.D.) refers to the grant of two palikās by Rudrapāla and Amṛitapāla conjointly with the queen-mother Mahādevī<sup>1</sup>. The Sānderāy Stone Inscription of Kelhanadeva (c. 1164 A.D.) records the grant of land by Ānala, the queen-mother of Kelhanadeva<sup>2</sup>. Another inscription of the same king dated V.S. 1233 (c. 1176 A.D.) says that queen Mahādevī made a grant with the sons of Kīrtipāla, the younger brother of Kelhanadeva<sup>3</sup>.

Besides queens, some of the ladies of landed aristocracy also played <sup>some</sup> ~~a valuable~~ role in the political sphere. The Rājataranginī gives <sup>a</sup> ~~a~~ unique example of a <sup>D</sup> ~~damarī~~ of Nīlāsava who was ruling during the reign of Jayasīma<sup>4</sup> (c. 1128-50 A.D.). The Dāmaras had their own importance in the history of Kashmir but the reference to a female <sup>D</sup> ~~damara~~ is quite significant.

The history of the Cāhādavāla dynasty bears testimony to the fact that some women took active part in the administration. It is said that Jambukī was made the chief of all the Pattalikās by Kumāradevī, the queen of Govindacandra<sup>5</sup> (c. 1100-70 A.D.). ~~It shows that the queen could promote Pattalikās and that there were many such Pattalikās.~~

1. E.I., Vol. XI, p. 25.

2. Ibid, p. 47.

3. Ibid, p. 49.

4. नीलाश्वतरंगिणी नाम्नी पर्याख्यान ।

Raj., VIII, 3115.

5. E.I., Vol. IX, pp. 319-28.

4 H.C. Ray, Dynastic History of Northern India, vol. I, p. 528.

A Telugu woman Nāyakurālū is mentioned in songs and legend. She was a foundling brought up by a farmer. She married a rich man and after his death inherited a vast fortune. She won the favour of Haihaya prince Amugurāja who was ruling over Paṇḍr in the twelfth century. She continued to occupy a high place in the political sphere during the reign of next chief, Nalagamma. It was she who was practically the ruler and the chief was there for name only. In order to maintain her kingdom she also fought as the leader of her army.<sup>1</sup>

#### Women's Participation In Wars

In Kāmarūpa queen Maynāmatī displayed great valour in defeating Dharmapala in the eleventh century. In order to make her son the crown prince, she declared war against the king who was badly defeated.<sup>2</sup>

It is said that in 712 A.D. Dāhir was defeated by the Arab General Muhammad-Bin-Qasim. After the death of the king on the battlefield, his queen Rānī Bāī continued the fight with a small number of soldiers, although the Arabs were in great strength. She fought bravely but when there was no hope of self-defence, she with the other ladies jumped into the fire and saved her honour.<sup>3</sup> Lādī, the other wife of Dahir was imprisoned along with his two daughters.

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1. R.C. Majumdar, Great Women of India, p. 316.

2. N.H. Vasu, The Social History of Kāmarūpa, Vol. I, p. 173.

3. Elliot, H.I., Vol. I, p. 172.

The bravery with which queen Nāikidevī, the mother of Mularāja II fought against the enemy is praiseworthy. The event took place in the twelfth century when her son was a child, a Muslim invader (Muhammad Ghori)<sup>1</sup> attacked Annahilavāda. The battle began in the mountain pass called Gadaraghatta. Nāikidevī took her son in her lap and fought with remarkable ability. At last she became victorious.<sup>2</sup>

In one of the stories of the Kathāsaritsāgara it is said that queen Tejasvatī assisted king Adityasena in the battlefield.<sup>3</sup> The active participation of the queens in the wars, is also testified by some of the scenes depicted on the temples of Khajurāho. In some such scenes the queen is seen seated on the elephant along with the king who is facing the enemy's army.<sup>4</sup> In one of the scenes a woman is depicted as holding an armed soldier.<sup>5</sup> Women with arms are clearly visible in some other scenes also.<sup>6</sup>

It is evident from the inscriptions as well as the literary sources that some women other than queens also participated in wars. An inscription c. 880 A.D., of the Gurjara Pratihāra king Bhoja tells us that the king was able to

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1. H.C. Ray, Dynastic History of Northern India, Vol. II, p.1005.

2. P.C., Tr. Tawney, pp. 182-5.

3. O.S., Vol. II, pp. 55-6.

4. Back base of Lakṣmaṇa and Kandarīyā Mahādeva temples.

5. Right outside Viśvanātha Temple.

6. Right and back outside Dūlādeo Temple.



conquer the Āsuras with the help of women who lived on arms<sup>1</sup>.

It is stated in the Rājataranginī that Sillā led an army and conducted the soldiers. She was the mother of Vijaya- a <sup>Pr</sup>āmara from Devasarasa. King Sussala was moving forward along with his troops towards Vijayakṣetra. After crossing Vitastā river he found that the bridge was collapsing and a large number of soldiers had still to cross it. The King went forward with those who had crossed the bridge and the remaining soldiers were led by Sillā<sup>2</sup>. Chhuddā the wife of Garga, was another heroic woman who had her own troops. With the help of her troops and the royal forces she fought bravely and inflicted defeat on the <sup>her</sup> enemies<sup>3</sup>.

#### Political Mission

It is clear from the history of our period that sometimes ~~the~~ queens were sent on political mission also. It is said in the Rājataranginī that <sup>one</sup> king Jayasimha ~~had~~ decided to send his queen Kalhanikā on such a mission. She knew the importance and seriousness of the work that was assigned to her, ~~still she~~ <sup>and</sup> accepted the king's request, <sup>however, she</sup> ~~but~~ said that it was not in.

#### 1. यः कलाष वायुरान् धोरान् स्त्रीण-वास्त्र-रेक-वृणिता

The Gwalior Ins. of Gurjara-Pratihāra Khoja,

R.D. Pandey, Historical And Literary Inscriptions, p. 165,

V. Upadhyaya, A Study of Ancient Indian Inscriptions, p. 146.

#### 2. विष्णुस्याध्वनो विल्लास्या स्वामिनीष्कित्तु ।

विनाय देवतरुं सैन्यं तद्विजयस्वरात् ॥

Rāj., VIII, 1069.

2. Ibid. VIII. 1137.

accordance with the rules of the State<sup>1</sup>. It shows that she was well-versed in political affairs of the kingdom. She was one of the most respected queens of her time and the news that the queen was ~~coming~~<sup>going</sup> to mediate, was enough for Bhoja, and he readily agreed to make alliance with the king Jayasimha as it was impossible for him to dishonour the ~~great~~ queen<sup>2</sup>. Likewise Nona, the nurse of king Bhoja was also entrusted with such a mission<sup>3</sup>.

### Palace Intrigues

Often there were many queens and many sons of a king. Every queen wanted to make her son the heir to the throne. So often there used to be conspiracy and quarrel among them. They played significant role in the war<sup>o</sup> of succession. King Lothana, a brother of Sussala was successful in acquiring the throne of Lohara in 1130 A.D. His success was the outcome of the intrigues and connivance of the ladies of the harem. Salhana and Lothana were two brothers whom king Sussala had made prisoners and they were put on Lohara hill. Salhana was killed by the servants of the fort and Lothana was made their king<sup>4</sup>. In order to make every body believe that it ~~is~~<sup>was</sup> the will of the dying king Sussala,

1. Rāj., VIII, 3097-8, 3101.

2. श्रीकस्तुर्देवीमायांतीं वृत्वा लुहं ततः ।

पूर्वं संवित्तया बद्ध इति सुव्यक्रममप्यथा ॥

एतावन्ति दिनान्यासीत्पूर्वं प्रसयिता पुमान् ।

संकल्पीनां पाप्यस्यै स्वकृत्या एकीन्यवामपत् ॥

Ibid, VIII, 3117-8.

3. Ibid, VIII, 3061.

4. दृष्ट्वा पुनान्निर्निहं वृत्वा च निशि लोहम् ।

सिंहराजसामिषिष्णुप्रासादाग्रेऽप्यनेकम् ॥

Ibid, VIII, 1822.

they with the help of the queen of Lothana prepared a forged document<sup>1</sup>. One of the queens of Sussala who was also in Lohara became their supporter in this conspiracy<sup>2</sup>.

We also come across a reference where the queen did not hesitate even to commit the heinous crime of bringing defeat to her own husband in order to make her son the heir <sup>to</sup> of his throne. ~~the history of~~ <sup>in</sup> Cāhaḍavāla dynasty of Kanauj tells us that when king Jayachandra refused to declare her son as crown-prince, Sūhava, who was not of a royal lineage got annoyed, <sup>and</sup> she secretly called <sup>the</sup> turko-Afghans to inflict defeat on the king<sup>3</sup>. ~~She also caused the drowning of Jayachandra into the river<sup>3</sup>. But the~~ validity of this evidence of the Prabandha Cintāmaṇi is not beyond doubt. Fārishta also relates a similar story about the wife of the Rājā of Uch. He says that, relying on the promise of the Ghori chieftain that he would give her the kingdom and marry her daughter, the queen murdered her husband. As per his words, the chieftain married her daughter but her hopes of getting the

1. कश्यपेभ्यो नृपेणाहपावशेषाग्राणादुज्जिता ।  
प्रेषि शासनमेतादुमिति प्रत्यय सिद्धये ॥  
कोट्टीक सामशेषाणां गृह्णु ऐतान्निवधाय ते ।  
निबद्ध संविदः पूर्वमभिधीष्यस्य भार्यया ॥

Rāj., VIII, 1820-21.

2. हारवात्यामधुरीकापि मुस्सलमुपेतः ।  
तत्रस्थिताऽभवत्तुष्टाशेषानामनुमत्तप्रदा ॥  
Ibid., VIII, 1823.

3. P.C., Tr. Tawney, pp. 183-85.

kingdom were belied as she was sent to Chazni.<sup>1</sup> But like the previous story, its validity is not wholly acceptable and some scholars have even dismissed it altogether.<sup>2</sup>

Although we have evidence to show the active participation of women in political affairs, yet it may be said that such women were in minority. Needless to say that the majority of them were least interested to know the ins and outs of politics and under the existing conditions they could not be expected to do so.

#### Their Role In The Judicial Administration

One more aspect that throws some light on the position of women in the political sphere was their nominal role in the judicial administration of the country. Generally women were debarred from acting as witnesses,<sup>3</sup> as due to the alleged lack of deciding power they were not expected to describe the actual situation.

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1. Briggs, Vol. I, pp. 169-70.

2. A.K. Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, pp. 341, 488, footnote (20).

3. Manu, VIII, 77; Yāj., II, 70;

Medha. and Anllūka on Manu, VIII, 77;

Viśva. on Yāj., II, 72, 74;

Apararka on Yāj., II, 70.

But it was opined by the lawgivers that women could act as witnesses in the disputes pertaining to women<sup>1</sup>. Further, it was ordained that in the absence of legitimate witnesses, and in the litigation concerning the courageous acts like theft, women<sup>2</sup> as well as children and the old persons could be summoned as witnesses. Medhātithi (c. 900 A.D.) was of the view that, besides the matters of their mutual disputes, sometimes women could also be witnesses even in the cases concerning men as some ladies possessed the qualities of resoluteness of mind and truthfulness<sup>3</sup>. He also granted this right to women in the event of non-availability of any legitimate witness<sup>4</sup>. Kullūka (C. 1150-1200 A.D.) also held same view as regards the disputes concerning women<sup>5</sup> and in case of non-availability of other witnesses<sup>6</sup>.

As regards the cases involving courage, it was opined that even the forbidden witnesses could be allowed to give statement.

1. Manu, VIII, 68.

2. Manu, VIII, 70, 72; Yāj., II, 72.

3. स्त्रीणां सिद्धा एव साक्ष्यं कुर्वन् पुमांसः । केवलं पुंविषये व्यवहारे क्वचिदेव स्त्रीणां साक्ष्यं यतोऽस्मिरत्वादिति । भवन्ति कारका सिद्धौ ब्रह्मादिन्य इव सत्यवादिन्यः स्थिरबुद्धयश्च ।

Medh. on Manu, VIII, 68.

4. वसंभवेऽन्येणां साक्षिणां सिद्ध्याऽपि कार्यं ।

Medh. on Manu, VIII, 70.

5. स्त्रीणामन्योन्यव्यवहारे कृणादानादौ सिद्धः साक्षिण्यो भवन्ति ।

Kullūka on Manu, VIII, 68.

6. साक्ष्यमावैसति स्त्री बालवृद्धादिभ्यश्च पुदासकर्करा अपि साक्षिणः स्युः ।

Kullūka on Manu, VIII, 70.

The view of Kullūka is worth noting in this connection.<sup>1</sup>

Vijñānesvara (c. 1080-1100 A.D.), the commentator of Yājñavalkya, also held the same opinion.<sup>2</sup> Apararka (c. 1150-30 A.D.) granted the permission to those women only who were faultless.<sup>3</sup>

### Women In Domestic Life

Majority of women, of course, were in the domestic life only, without any independent career. The question arises as to how far there were restrictions on their movement in society, whether they observed the purdah or not. The literature of the period reveals that the Purdah system was adopted by a section of the ruling aristocracy as a mark of prestige and culture.

It was felt that there was no harm in perceiving a maiden<sup>4</sup> but this was not the case with the married woman.<sup>5</sup> A reference in the Nāgāranda (c. 625 A.D.) of King Harṣa seems to suggest

1. गृहदारविभुं दास्येज्यस्य स्त्रीर्दण्डवत् वाग्वद्व्याख्याये च गुणिन  
इत्युक्तमस्तिविरोधा न कथं।

2. Vij. on Yāj. II, 72.

3. स्त्री प्रभुतेनां दुष्टासह्यत्वादिविरोधरहितमस्ति दास्येज्यमन वेदितव्यम् ।  
Apararka on Yāj. II, 72.

4. राजा - वयस्य निर्वोधकानां कथं कथं स्त्रीकथम् । निष्कथयिष्यामि वयस्यम् ।  
Priya, Act II, p. 32.

विदुः कः - नो वयस्य कथं कथं स्त्रीकथम् । तर्हि न प्रेम्णवत् ।

मत्स्यकः - को वीरः । कथं हि निर्वोधकानां मयस्ति ।  
Nāgā., Act I, p. 18.

5. कदापिद् गृह्यन्मार्गोऽयं स्त्रीकथो न विद्यति ।  
Ibid, p. 18.

that women used to wear veil and did not go out without it<sup>1</sup>. In the Kādambarī queen Vilāsavati is depicted as sitting on a covered cot<sup>2</sup>. Post Maṅha who flourished in the beginning of the eighth century A.D. <sup>refers to</sup> also ~~establishes~~ the use of veil among the ladies<sup>3</sup>.

The married women had to observe purdah as a sign of respect to the elders<sup>4</sup>. The seclusion of women is also proved by a reference found in the Randamālā. It <sup>is said</sup> ~~says~~ that, on hearing the voice of some 'Ālmiki, Sītā became nervous but told him loudly that she was all alone there<sup>5</sup>. It seems that no person other than her own relatives could see a women. The term 'antarvāsini' is used for women in the same play<sup>6</sup>. <sup>the evidence</sup> ~~A reference~~ given by Jineśvara Sūri (C. 1051 A.D.) suggests that the women of the royal harems <sup>also</sup> observed purdah. <sup>According to him</sup> ~~He writes that~~ on the

1. विदूषकः - उद्य वा एतेनैव मलयवत्याः सकाशाल्लभ्यन्त रक्षाङ्गुलमलेन स्त्रीवेषविधायीरियकृताकुण्ठनी गमिष्यामि ।

Ibid., Act III, p. 64.

2. V.S. Agrawal, Kādambarī - Ek Sāṃskṛtika Adhyayana, p. 312.

3. रक्तताकुण्ठनपटाः पाणालक्ष्यपाणवस्त्रभ्रियः सम्यक्प्राप्तुमीदृशेस्मा ।

Śisupālāśadha, v. 17.

4. रामः - एतै गुह्यः तदप्युक्त्य कृताकुण्ठना मय ।

M.C., Act II, p. 84.

5. अत्याक्षितम् । अन्य एष की वा परपुरुषः । क्व इदानीं वारयिष्यामि महाक्षितम् ? (विचिन्त्य) एकम् । स्त्री अहमेकाकिनी च ।

K.M., Act I, p. 37.

6. सम्भूत एव यज्ञभारी महाराजस्य, निर्मञ्जितः सान्त्वयिषिनी कस्तपीक्षानां सम्पत्ताः ।

Ibid., Act II, p. 47.



occasion of the 'Kaumudi-mahotsava', the king gave the order to all menfolk to be away in the garden as women of the palace would enjoy themselves in the city and the king would also go out of the city<sup>1</sup>. Evidently it was done to avoid the chances of royal women being seen by the strangers.

But by this time the royal women were anxious to have their own separate entity by breaking man-made wall of the purdah. Ratneprabhā, the heroine of a story of the Kathāsarit-sāgara (C. 1063-81 A.D.) spoke against the views of her husband who was of the opinion that even his intimate friends should not see her. She proudly said that there was no need of seclusion for ~~the~~ noble women, <sup>and</sup> their virtue was their only guard<sup>2</sup>. But this awakening had little effect on society and the purdah used to be customary among the royal women. Hemacandrācārya (c. 1089-1172 A.D.) informs us that the royal women could not be seen by the strangers and they used to sit behind the curtain in the presence of such persons<sup>3</sup>. He also refers to women whose faces were covered with veils<sup>4</sup>.

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1. "जन्म राईर जी कर्ण बंध तेषा सव्येण वि उज्जाणी नतर्ज्व । जन्म देवीणा नयर प्यारी होही । ता जी पुरिसी बाहिं न मोई तस सारीरी धरौ । राया वि नयर बाहिं एस निग्नच्छ । ता निग्नच्छ भी नायरा । सव्ये " वि

K.P., Vanikaputradrāṣṭānta, n. 131.

2. आयुप्रसंगेन वदामि त्वं तच्छुभम् । नीतिमात्रमहं मन्ये स्त्रीणां रक्षानिवन्धनाम् ॥  
हृष्याङ्गीतिः क्वा मोहः कार्यं तेन न किञ्च । महर्षेणारण्यन्ते जीलेन कुलस्त्रियः ॥

K.S.S., 36, 6-7.

3. "S.P., Vol. II, Ch. II, p. 35.

4. Ibid., p. 64.

Although we have evidences to believe that some of the Rajput ladies displayed valour in wars and ability in administration, yet it may not be presumed that all the royal Rajput ladies enjoyed full freedom. It is stated in the *Rāsmālā* that prince Jugdev's arrival was reported to his wife but before coming to him she personally confirmed by seeing from behind the bushes that he was her own husband as she did not want to come before <sup>any</sup> the strangers. While going with him she covered her face with a veil<sup>1</sup>.

The erection of the inner apartments and the 'avarodhas' in the palaces where the ladies used to be confined, testifies to the fact that women had to observe strict purdah from men. Some ladies were proud of being called 'asūryamaṇḍāśyās', who did not even look at the Sun considering him as a 'parapuruṣa'<sup>2</sup>. A reference given by Bilhana (C. 1088 A.D.) suggests the use of purdah by the ladies<sup>3</sup>. Yaśhapāla in his famous allegorical drama *Moharājaparaṇaya* (C. 1174-7 A.D.) hints at the existence of this system among the ladies of the harem<sup>4</sup>. Rājasekhara Sūri refers to a daughter of the king for whom a tutor was engaged but she used to write from behind the curtain<sup>5</sup>.

1. A.K. Forbes, *Rāsmālā*, Ch. VIII, pp. 120-9.

2. Dasharatha Sharma, *Early Chauhan Dynasties*, Ch. XIII, p. 259.  
*But this is a figurative expression.*

3. V.D.C., ed. Bühler, p. 97.

4. **वदन्त्याः सु पापुर्गः**

*Moharājaparaṇaya*, v. 52.

5. P.K., *Madanakīrtiprabandha*, v. 64.

As regards Abu Said's remark, <sup>1500 A.D.</sup> "Most princes in India allow their women to be seen when they hold their courts, <sup>and so</sup> ~~to~~ veil <sup>conceal</sup> them from the eyes of the visitors"<sup>1</sup>, it may be said that this <sup>appears to hold good for the South India</sup> ~~conforms to the~~ <sup>tradition</sup> ~~reason~~ only. Mr. C. V. Vaidya is of the opinion that the constant presence of the female attendants in the courts of the kings might have given the wrong impression to the Arab traveller and the kings' wives and queens were not expected to appear in the courts<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>vogue</sup> ~~being~~ Thus the general belief that the purdah system came into <sup>vogue</sup> ~~being~~ with the advent of the Muslims and it was unknown in the pre-Mohammedan era<sup>3</sup>, seems to be quite incorrect. But apparently small sections of the royal and higher classes of society used to observe it.)

<sup>however,</sup> Women of the lower strata of society <sup>sometimes</sup> were not compelled to observe any purdah. <sup>sometimes</sup> they used to supplement the income of their families by working in the field, spinning etc.<sup>4</sup>.

But there were certain rules of conduct and the social freedom of women was restricted to a large extent. They were

1. Elliot, H.I., Vol. I, p. 11.

Nadvi, Arab Aur Bharata Ka Sambandha, p. 30.

2. C. V. Vaidya, History of Medieval Hindu India, Vol. II, ~~Ch. III~~ p. 183.

3. Prof. Indra, The Status of Women In Ancient India, Ch. I, p. 73.

4. Supra, pp. 18, 45.

allowed to speak only <sup>to</sup> ~~with~~ a doctor, merchant and a sage for their own business, but not to others<sup>1</sup>. It was believed that one of the way of ~~steering~~ <sup>we</sup> women on right path was not to give them much freedom<sup>2</sup>. It was not considered proper for them to move about lonely<sup>3</sup>. The lawgivers had prescribed a life of perpetual tutelage for a woman by advocating that the father should protect her during her maidenhood, the husband should guard her during her youth and the son should protect her in her old age as she was not fit for enjoying any freedom<sup>4</sup>. But this should not be taken to mean that no freedom was allowed to her. Medhātithi was of the view that this protection was meant to be against the vices and evil influences<sup>5</sup> and in view of her wavering nature this protection was necessary for their own benefit as well as for her family<sup>6</sup>.

The daily routine of an ideal wife was so chalked out as to keep her busy all through <sup>out</sup> the day ~~and night~~ in the household duties<sup>7</sup>, ~~and she could not get freedom even for a moment~~<sup>8</sup>. But

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1. न परपुरुषमपिमाणीन् अन्यत्रमपि गच्छन्ति विप्रयः ।

Śaṅkha quoted by Aparārka on Yāj. I, 82.

2. Dharmabindu, p. 15.

3. Jñāna, I, vs. 86-7.

4. Manu, V, 147-48, IX, 3; Yāj., I, 85.

5. On Manu, IX, 3.

6. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, ~~Ch. II~~, p. 328;

H.M. Das, Women In Manu And His Seven Commentators, ~~Ch. II~~, p. 262.

7. Supra, Ch. III, pp. <sup>108</sup> 113-4;

Śukra, IV, IV, 12-42;

8. H.N. Sharma, Social Life In Northern India, Ch. II, p. 25.

it was expressly done with a view to preserve the sanctity of the married life as the constant attention to her household would not let her think any other matter and she would remain pure, and not with a view to curtail the freedom of a wife, but it may have amounted to a sort of disability imposed on women.

It is interesting to note that a section of society dubbed as Ārvakas strongly opposed the subjection of family women.<sup>1</sup> The Tantras also contributed much to their freedom. But Ksemendra tells us that the orthodox section of society did not welcome such an attitude towards women.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Naisadha, tr. Hardiqui, Canto XVII, v. 42.

Cf. B.N.S. Yadava, Some Aspects of Society in Northern India in the 12th century A.D., Ch. I, p. 11.

2.

X, 29.

B.N.S. Yadava, loc. cit.

Chapter VI

Women's Place In Religion

Chapter VIWomen's Place In Religion

The remarkable feature of the religious life of this period was the dominance of Paurāṇic Hinduism over the larger part of India. Vaiṣṇavism flourished under the patronage of various kings in Northern India and in the South the efforts of the <sup>A</sup>śvats and the ācāryas made it a popular faith<sup>1</sup>. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa which was written during the ninth-tenth centuries is an index of the growing popularity of the Vaiṣṇava faith in South India.

It must, however, be pointed out that Vaiṣṇavism could not attain so much popularity as Śaivism, although both were prevalent at one and the same time. Śaivism flourished almost all over India including even Kasmīra, Bengal, Assam, Nepal, Gujarat and South India<sup>2</sup>. The royal patronage was responsible to a large extent for its growth and development.

The <sup>rise</sup> ~~origin~~ of the Tāntric cults was a new feature of the religious history. The Tāntrics laid emphasis on the worship of Śiva and Śakti. They held that both Śiva and Śakti are like tree and shade<sup>3</sup>. They resorted to many Tāntric practices as a means of attaining siddhis<sup>4</sup>. The Tāntrics believed in the

1. The Age of Imperial Kannauj, Ch. XI, p. 311.

2. The Struggle For Empire, Ch. XVI, pp. 442-4;

A.K. Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, Ch. XV, p. 288;

Dasharatha Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, Ch. XXII, p. 230.

3. B.N. Sharma, Social Life In Northern India, Ch. V, p. 184.

4. Ibid.



supremacy of the female principle and held that all active virtues originate from it<sup>1</sup>. As a natural corollary of this theory, women were regarded as manifestation of Śakti and enjoyed various religious rights. The conferment of these rights may be taken as significant from the point of view of the religious status of women.

Buddhism was in a staggering state and was losing popular support. The increasing popularity of Jainism and Hinduism pushed it into the background<sup>2</sup>. The lack of separate and sufficient ~~social~~ social code of conduct and institutions, in the opinion of Dr. G.C. Pande, was one of the causes that led to its decline<sup>3</sup>. Buddhism was so much influenced by ~~Hindu~~ <sup>and assimilated by Hinduism</sup> Tāntricism that it almost lost its separate entity and this ~~assimilating nature of the religion~~ contributed much to its decline. The esoteric or Tāntric Buddhism <sup>appears to</sup> ~~as it was now known must~~ have ~~been~~ emerged in the seventh century<sup>4</sup> A.D. The main centres of Buddhism were Kashmir<sup>5</sup>, Bengal and Bihar<sup>6</sup> (during the reign of Pāla kings, i.e. 10th-12th centuries A.D.) and to some extent Assam<sup>7</sup>. The age of the Pāla

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1. P. Thomas, Indian Women Through The Ages, Ch. X, p. 276.
  2. The Struggle For Empire, Ch. XVI, p. 424.
  3. G.C. Pande, Bauddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Ke Itihāsa, Ch. XII, pp. 491-2, Cf. Lal Mani Joshi, Studies In the Buddhistic Culture of India, Ch. XII.
  4. Lal Mani Joshi, Studies In The Buddhistic Culture of India, Ch. X, pp. 315-6.
  5. S.C. Ray, Early History And Culture of Kashmir, Ch. VI, pp. 147-8, The Struggle For Empire, Ch. XVI, p. 419.
  6. The Struggle For Empire, Ch. XVI, p. 415.
  7. P.C. Choudhury, The History of Civilisation of The People of Assam, Section IV, p. 405.

kings has been regarded as the age of the Vajracāryas and Siddhacāryas<sup>1</sup>. Therefore by about that time Buddhism was completely under the influence of Tāntricism. In fact Hinduism, Buddhism and even Jainism could not remain untouched by the growing influence of Tāntricism<sup>2</sup>.

Jainism, on the other hand clung to its orthodoxy and thus was successful in preserving its separate existence<sup>3</sup>. It vigorously flourished in the Deccan and Western India, and some parts of Northern India were also under its influence<sup>4</sup>. Many Jainacāryas, <sup>e.g.</sup> ~~to mention some of them~~ Udyotana Sūri (C. 780 A.D.), Haribhadra Sūri (C. 788 - 820 A.D.), Siddharsi Sūri (C. 906 A.D.), Jinesvara Sūri (11th cen. A.D.) and Hemacandra Sūri (C. 1089 - 1173 A.D.) did not leave any stone unturned in making it widely prevalent.

<sup>the mutual</sup> ~~A reciprocal~~ influence of various religious sects upon <sup>one another</sup> ~~each other~~ and religious harmony <sup>in the</sup> ~~according to many~~ was the main characteristic of the age<sup>5</sup>. The ascetic religions like Buddhism and Jainism were becoming theistic due to the growing influence

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1. G.C. Pandey, *Bauddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Kā Itihāsa*, Ch. XII, p. 128.

2. B.N. Sharma, *Social Life In Northern India*, Ch. V, p. 128.

3. *The Age of Imperial Kannauj*, Ch. XI, p. 257.

4. A.S. Altekar, *Rāṣṭrakūṭas And Their Times*, Ch. XIII, p. 309;  
*Chaulukyas of Gujarat*, Ch. XV, p. 310;

B.N. Sharma, *Social Life In Northern India*, Ch. VI, p. 206;

Dasharatha Sharma, *Early Chauhan Dynasties*, Ch. XXII, p. 221.

5. *The Age of Imperial Kannauj*, Ch. XI, p. 257;

B.N. Sharma, *Social Life In Northern India*, Ch. V, pp. 125-6;

A.K. Majumdar, *Chaulukyas of Gujarat*, Ch. XV, pp. 328, 330-2.

of Hinduism. The images of Buddha and Jinas were installed in the temples as they were considered the incarnations of Viṣṇu.<sup>1</sup> The worship of Śiva and Viṣṇu as Hari-Hara also represents<sup>ed</sup> the same tendency of the age. Alberuni has given a true picture of the religious life in his time (11th cen. A.D.). "To the idol of Viṣṇu are devoted the class called Bhāgavatas, to the idol of the Sun the Māga, i.e., the Magians, to the idol of Mahādeva, a class of saints anchorites with long hair, who cover their skin with ashes, hang on their persons the bones of dead people and swim in the pools. The Brāhmaṇas are devoted to the Eight Mothers, Shamāncans to the Buddha, Arhants to the class called Nagna. On the whole to each idol certain people are devoted who constructed it, for those who knew best how to serve it."<sup>2</sup>

The ancient temples of Khajurāho speak of the religious toleration ~~that reigned supreme~~ in the time when these temples were constructed (~~10th~~<sup>10th</sup> and eleventh centuries). Most of these temples are dedicated to the various Hindu gods, and some ~~are dedicated~~ to the Jaina Tīrthamkaras. A statue of Buddha which is preserved in the Khajurāho museum leads one to infer that he was also worshipped during the Chandella period.<sup>3</sup>

But how far there had been cordial relations among various sects, is difficult to ascertain. The literature of these religions tells that often there were clashes among the different sects,

1. The Age of Imperial Kannauj, Ch. XII, p. 257.

2. Sachau, Vol. I, p. 121

3. U. Agarwal, Khajurāho Sculptures And Their Significance, Ch. II, pp. 20-6.

each considering itself superior tried to defame the other.

The social status of women in these religions has been noticed here and there in the previous chapters. Here, we shall confine our study only to the religious status of women and shall discuss their rights and disabilities in this context.

### Hinduism

A close scrutiny of the Dharmasāstra literature reveals that there was a tendency to curtail the religious rights of women. The Vedic age was a golden age for women as far as the religious status is concerned. They could perform religious rites independently. Some lady seers of remarkable ability enriched the Vedic literature and religion. But later on we find that the Vedic study and the upanayana saṁskāra were denied to them and they came to be graded with the Śūdras<sup>1</sup>. But Manu, Yājñavalkya and their commentators were of the opinion that a wife had a right to participate in the religious rites with her husband but she could not perform any such rite independently, without the permission of her husband<sup>2</sup>. It was also opined by some that the wife was not to utter the name of the deity and the word 'svaha' in performing any religious sacrifice<sup>3</sup>. Thus there was the tendency of narrowing down the religious rites of women.

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1. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, p. 205.

2. Supra, Ch. III, pp. 108-10. <sup>114-5</sup>

3. Ibid.

~~status, on the other hand it indirectly pointed to her weakness by imposing some conditions.~~

Whether women were eligible for renunciation (Sanyāsa) or not, is a crucial question. Yama (8th cen. A.D.) was of the view that the Dharmaśāstra works did not consider women fit for treading the path ~~to~~<sup>of</sup> sanyāsa<sup>1</sup>. But, in actual practice we find that some women adopted this course. The evidence of the Kādambarī which tells us about the Pāsūpata,<sup>and</sup> Naisthika ~~and~~ Parivrājikās<sup>2</sup>, cannot be discarded.

The wave of Paurāṇic Hinduism that swept across India in this period, took most of the people into its hold. Many persons were influenced by the ideology of Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava faiths, ~~and they further preached and developed the religion to a considerable extent.~~ What is more important for our purpose was the inclusion of women among such persons. This religion emphasised ~~on~~ the importance of faith and bhakti and so it appealed to women in general<sup>3</sup>.

1. स्त्रियाः धृती या शास्त्रे वा प्रख्या न विधीयते ।

प्रजा हि तस्याः स्वी कर्तुं स्वर्णादिति धारणा ॥

Yama quoted in S.C.V., p. 596.

2. षष्ठमस्मल्लाटिकाभिरदामालामरिषत्तप्रचलकरत्ताभिः पादुपतत्रतधारिणीमिर्जितु-  
रानाहणा-करामिष्व पलिआभिकाभिः ---- जटाभिवत्कलाणाडधारिणीभि-  
र्वर्णिर्विन्हमिस्ताप्योभिः सादादिव मन्त्रदेवताभिः पठन्तीभिः ---- ।

Kādambarī, p. 371.

3. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation,  
Ch. VII, p. 207.

Many women saints and mystics added glory to Hinduism by their sacred deeds. "As the lamps of Diwali brighten the darkness of the Indian sky, so the lives of the women saints of East and West illuminate a world too often shadowed by disillusionment and doubt."<sup>1</sup> These words of Smt. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit ~~are enough to~~ show the importance of women saints in the religious history of India .

The Tiruttondar Purānam refers to two such ladies. One of them was Tilakavati who flourished in the seventh century. She belonged to the Vallala community. After the death of her husband she dedicated her life to the service of Lord Śiva. She was an ardent worshipper of Śiva, but her brother had faith in Jainism. It pained her much and she persuaded him to accept the Śaiva faith and with her divine power she became successful in her effort. She was so popular that the people <sup>installed</sup> ~~erected~~ her image in a shrine of the temple at Tiruvadigai<sup>2</sup>.

Another South Indian woman of great repute was 'Mangaiyarkarashi' (i.e. queen among women). In the seventh century Jainism was becoming more and more popular. King Kūṇ Pāṇḍya of Madura was a staunch supporter of this faith. His queen Mangair and chief minister were Śaiva by faith. <sup>At first</sup> They were worried on account of the king's negligence to the presiding deity of the Pāṇḍyas - i.e. Śiva. In order to change the mind of the king, she called a great saint to the court. The king was so much impressed by his convincing arguments that he became the

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1. Women Saints of East And West, Foreword, p. 7.

2. G.W.I., Ed. R.C. Majumdar, Ch. XV, p. 298.



follower of Śaivism<sup>1</sup>. The credit for all this goes to his wife.

Akkamahādevī was another zealot worshipper of Lord Śiva<sup>2</sup>. She came of an ordinary middle class family of South India. Her parents were also devotees of Lord Śiva. She was not worldly-minded. Having been influenced by Bāsava, who was the originator of the Liṅgāyata cult, she became his disciple. Bāsava was of the view that women are not inferior to men and that due respect and honour should be given to them. Akkādevī too started to preach his philosophy. Her sayings are remarkable examples of poetical beauty and deal with the topsy-turvy affairs and difficulties of the worldly life. Some religious books were also said to be written by her. She died in 1166 A.D. Her popularity and greatness may be known from the fact that after her death a work named *Mahādeviyakkana Purāṇa* <sup>composed</sup> was written to immortalise her name<sup>3</sup>. *From the fact that the work is so popular that it is still being recited in the temples of the region.*

Among the Vaiṣṇava saints Kodai occupies a very high place. Kodai, the foster daughter of Viṣṇuchitta (Periyālvār), was so great a devotee of Lord Raṅganātha that people called her the incarnation of Bhūdevī, the wife of Lord Viṣṇu. She was called Āṇḍāl. The Tamil term Azhwar or Ālvār means "he who dives deep into the ocean of countless auspicious attributes of God" and Āṇḍāl is the feminine term having the same meaning<sup>4</sup>.

1. Ibid.

2. Women Saints of East And West, Ch. V, pp. 30-40.

3. G.W.I., Ed. R.C. Majumdar, Ch. XV, p. 303.

4. Women Saints of East And West, Ch. IV, p. 23.



She was whole-heartedly devoted to the Lord and wanted to be united with Him. It is said that her father used to make the garlands for the god but before he could offer them to Him, Kodai innocently used to wear them. One day her father saw this act and threw away the worn-garlands. To his surprise the Lord appeared in his dream and said that the garlands were dear to Him as they possessed the fragrance of the pure selfless love of Kodai. Only then Viṣṇuchitta came to know of the greatness of his daughter<sup>1</sup>. This episode is also recorded in one of the Chola inscriptions<sup>2</sup>.

Kodai was forgetful of her environment and lived in her imaginary world of perpetual bliss. She observed various vows. Her Lord was so kind to her that He advised her father to bring his daughter to His temple. His father acted according to the wish of God and it is believed that she was mingled with the idol of Rāṅganātha. Her images <sup>were</sup> ~~had been~~ installed in the Viṣṇu temples of South India<sup>3</sup>.

~~Among the pious devotees of Lord Viṣṇu, mention may be made of~~ Chankrottu Amma who belonged to Kerala. She is said to have flourished in the eighth century A.D.<sup>4</sup> She undertook many hardships in strictly observing the vows. It was due to her intense devotion and strong faith that she <sup>is said to have</sup> got the 'darsana' of Lord Viṣṇu and attained mokṣa<sup>5</sup>. A Viṣṇu temple was built by the

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1. Ibid., pp. 23 ff.

2. An Ins. of Kulottunga, S.I.E., p. 78.

3. G.W.I., Ed. R.C. Majumdar, Ch. XV, p.

4. Women Saints of East And West, Ch. XI, p. 81.

5. Ibid.

people in order to immortalise her name.

Many Śiva temples were constructed in the time of the Chola kings, and in most of the cases their queens either jointly with their husbands or independently built these temples. Sembiyan-mahādevī, the queen of king Gaṇḍarāditya, (C. 949-57 A.D.) ~~who ruled in the tenth century~~, was a pious lady and spent her riches in repairing and building the temples, and also in various acts of charity. She dedicated numerous bronze images depicting the various moods and poses of Śiva to the temples. She also <sup>donated</sup> ~~gave~~ lands, jewels, silver and gold vessels to the temples. The arrangement for the feeding of the Brāhmanas attached to the temples and for the maintenance of the musicians, was also made by her<sup>1</sup>.

Kundavai, the elder sister of Rājaraṇa I (C. 985-1014 A.D.) is said to have understood dharma in its real sense and was above the feeling of sectarianism. We see that she constructed the temples of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras. It appears that she believed in religious toleration. At Tanjore she built a hospital where the people could get medical help free of cost. She reserved a tract of land for the maintenance of the hospital. Thus, it is evident that, besides being religious-minded, she was also kind and charitable to the poor. This generous lady passed away in A.D. 1019<sup>2</sup>.

The construction of ~~the~~ temples by women, not belonging to the royalty, is indicative of the religious fervour of women. It

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1. G.W.I., Ed. R.C. Majumdar, Ch. XV, p. 305.

2. Ibid.

is said that a temple of Keśavadeva was erected by Rebbaladevī in Bellary district. She made over a gift of land to this temple and founded a feeding house for the Brāhmaṇas<sup>1</sup>.

Some epigraphs of South India reveal that some women performed various religious acts. Many temples of Hindu gods were erected in the seventh century A.D. One of them was the Kailāśanātha temple of Kanchi. An inscription on the temple says that queen Raṅgapatākā, the wife of king Rājasimha, had to play a great role in getting it constructed<sup>2</sup>. It is known from an inscription that Lokamahādevī, the queen of king Vikramāditya II (C. 733-44 A.D.) of <sup>the</sup> Chalukya dynasty, built a Śiva temple at Pattadakal<sup>3</sup>. As a reward of the marvellous workmanship of the builders, she exempted <sup>the</sup> builders of the entire district from paying certain taxes.

Some of the Chola inscriptions also speak of the religious acts of women. An inscription of Rājarāja I refers to the endowment of land by the wife of the Commander Rājendra Śola Brahmārayār, to a temple of Lord Viṣṇu which was said to be built by her<sup>4</sup>. An inscription of Kullottuṅga III mentions the religious acts of a lady called Nambāṇḍāl<sup>5</sup>.

We notice that sometimes the queens, guided by the religious zeal, induced upon the kings to give some monetary help to the

1. Ibid., p. 307.

2. Ibid.

3. Pattadakal Ins. of Kīrtivarman II, E.I., Vol. III, p. 5.

4. E.I., Vol. XXII, p. 236.

5. S.I.E., p. 77.

temples of their favourite gods. King Vīra Chola had to do this in order to honour the words of his wife<sup>1</sup>. An inscription of Prthvīśvara says that his mother Jāyam-mahādevī built a temple of Kuntimādhava at Śrīpīthapura and covered the image of Viṣṇu with gold. She also donated a village to the holy god, so that all the religious rites and festivals could be performed with eclat<sup>2</sup>. Kundaladevi or Kundabbarasi, the chief wife of Kundaṛāja was anxious to see the development of Śaivism, and her contribution to it, was the endowment of land for the benefit of a Śaiva temple<sup>3</sup>. A religious act was performed by Umāiyammai<sup>4</sup>. She consecrated an image in the temple of Ājurām. She also made a gift of land to another temple. The fact that Śrīdevī, the mother of Govana III, gave him the permission to grant a village to the god, proves that she was religious-minded, otherwise she would not have given the permission for such a religious deed<sup>5</sup>. It is

1. Ins. of Vīra Chola, E.I., Vol. IV, p. 138.

2. जयमन्मात्रा जयममहादेव्या प्री  
 कुमांदि विषये नवसहवाहनामा गृ (T) मी गुरुदीनारामसहिती-  
 सह श्री पिरापुरवासिनि (पिठापुर) भावते श्रीकुंतीमायकदेवाय  
 हविर्जन -  
 त्यर्चनात्यर्चनित्यनेमिदिक्कनात्सीत्यर्कवत्सरोत्सवा (या) त्य  
 गीत नृप  
 वापादिविविक्तागीत्यर्कवत् इति विदितस्तु वः ।  
 Pīthāpura Pillar Ins. of Prthvīśvara (Śaka 1108);  
 E.I., Vol. IV, pp. 46-7.

3. Kulenur Ins. of the Reign of Jayasimha II Śaka 950;  
 E.I., Vol. IV, p. 330.

4. Mamballi Plate of Śrīvallavangodaikollam, E.I., Vol. IX, pp. 234-5.

5. देवसंमनामानं ग्रामं देवाय गीवनः । श्रीदेव्यनुमते प्रादात्प्रतिष्ठापकरीषदा ॥

An Ins. of Govana III of the Nīkumbhavanśa (Śaka 1078),  
 E.I., Vol. VIII, v. 19, p. 41.

learnt from an inscription of the twelfth century A.D. that a Telugu woman Ganapāmbikā was the wife of a chief of a district. When Beta, her husband, died she engaged herself in pious works of welfare and constructed at least two temples.<sup>1</sup>

The women of Northern India also did not lag behind in the religious attainment. It is said that a woman named Yogesvari, by virtue of her merit of temple building, Kalhana frequently refers to the construction of temples by the royal women of Kasmira. He says that the wives of king Lalitāditya (c. 696-736 A.D.) erected numerous magnificent temples<sup>2</sup>. One of them established a silver idol of Keśava in a market founded by her<sup>3</sup>. After the death of king Jayāpīda (c. 813-14 A.D.) his mother constructed a temple of Amṛta Keśava<sup>4</sup>. The Jayeśvara temple was built by Jayādevī, the wife of king Lalitāpīda. Śūravarmā was the step brother of king Avantivarmā. His wife Kāvya-devī established an image of Śiva in Śūreśvarī and gave it the name of Kāvya-devīśvara - apparently to perpetuate her name<sup>5</sup>. Sugandhādevī (c. 904-6 A.D.) the queen mother of king Gopālavarman, erected a matha and Gopālakesava temple, as she was desirous to see the development

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1. Yevanadala Ins. of Ganapāmbā (Śaka 1172) vs. 16-25,

E.I., Vol. III, pp. 102-3.

2. J.A., Vol. II, pp. 220-23; cf. P. Bloch, The Paramāras, pp. 254, 284.

3. Rāj., IV, 207.

4. राज्ञी कमलवत्यस्य कलास्तुकाणिणी । राज्ञं विपुलाकारं कलाकेसवंव्ययात् ॥

Ibid., IV, 208.

5. Ibid., IV, 659.

6. काव्यदेव्यामिना दूरवतुः सुदाम्ब्याः व्ययात् ।

सदाशिवं दूरवर्मां काव्यदेवीश्वराभिकम् ॥

Rāj., V, 41.

of religion in the State<sup>1</sup>. Nandādevī, the wife of Gopālavarmā, constructed, 'Nandā matha' and 'Nandā Kesava'<sup>2</sup>.

Queen Diddā, the famous queen of king Kaemagupta who ruled over Kasmira in the 10th century, was famous for her temple building activities. She built various temples in the name of her husband, son and father. In all she is credited with the construction of sixty-four temples. She also renovated the old temples<sup>3</sup>. She was praised for making the confluence of <sup>the</sup> Sindhā and <sup>the</sup> Bitastā river, a holy place due to these temples<sup>4</sup>. Queen Sūryamatī, the wife of king Ananta (1028-63 A.D.), also did not lag behind in constructing temples. It is said that she established an idol of Lord Śiva on the bank of <sup>the</sup> Bitastā river and erected a 'matha' in her name<sup>5</sup>. On the occasion of installing a Śiva image, she gave numerous cows, <sup>and</sup> horses, wealth, gold and other things to the Brāhmaṇa in charity, <sup>is said to have</sup> and thus washed away their

1. गीपालपुराणीपालमठगीपालकेखात् । सा पुरं च स्वनामां च विदधेर्गुह्ये ॥

Ibid, V, 244.

2. गीपालकर्णा जाया नन्दा निन्धान्क्योदम्बा । शिष्टरप्यमन्न्दामठकेखापरिणी ॥

Ibid, V, 245.

3. तेषु तेषु प्रदेशेषु सिद्धिर्भूरिभिः शुभैः । सा प्रतिष्ठा प्यरक्यन्तुः षष्टमित्तिः ।  
जीर्णाद्वारुता देव्या षष्टप्रकारमण्डलाः । प्रायः गुरुताः सर्वे तिलावप्रावृताः कृताः  
Rāj., VI, 306-7.

4. षष्ठप्रतिष्ठाषष्ठनिर्माणार्थैः स्वर्गभिः । तयातिपाकरश्च कितस्तोसंयुग्मः ॥

Ibid, VI, 305.

5. गुप्तपारनामा सा गीरीश्वरविधायिनी । पुण्यं कितस्तापुलिनि निमि गुप्तपाम् ॥

Ibid, VII, 180;

V.D.C., canto XVIII, 44-5.



poverty for ever<sup>1</sup>. She is also said to have installed the tridents and Śivalīngas at various places so that Śaivism might spread far and wide<sup>2</sup>. The pious and religious acts of queen Ratnādevī are eulogised by Kalhana. It is said that she immortalised her name by making a matha. The temple of Mṛtyunjaya looked like a white island and her 'Gokula' surpassed all other Gokulas. The Govardhana temple built by her was <sup>very</sup> splendid, ~~that it was doubtful whether even the creator could make such a~~ marvellous temple. She also installed the images of various gods to perpetuate the names of faithful ministers and high officials who died in office<sup>3</sup>. King Jayasimha's wife, Raddādevī (12th cen. A.D.), was a religious-minded lady. She took part in 'Devayātrā' and was in the habit of going to the places of religious importance<sup>4</sup>. She also installed the images of various gods in the <sup>religious</sup> places she visited. The image of god Rudreśvara can still be seen in Kasmira, to which she dedicated a gold ornament of the name of 'Svarṇāmalaśāra'. She also erected <sup>a</sup> spacious building

1. गीर्वाणरत्नादिप्रदानैः पुण्ड्रिभ्याम् ।

सदाशिवप्रतिष्ठायां मद्विद्वत्कार सा ॥  
Raj., VII, 181.

2. त्रिशूलबाणलिंगादिप्रतिष्ठायां विनिर्मये ।  
Ibid, VII, 185.

3. Ibid, VIII, 2433-41.

4. कृतानुयात्रा सा देवयात्रायां शितिपूजना । राजकर्मो रिवामाति राज्ञामन्तर्निधिः  
सती देशे तीर्थयात्रास्तत्कृत्यस्या ----- ॥

Raj., VIII, 3383-4.



for the pilgrims<sup>1</sup>.

Mayanalladevi or Minaladevi is famous in Gujarat for her deeds of public welfare. She was a staunch devotee of Lord Somesvara. She felt the difficulty of the pilgrims who had to pay certain taxes at Bahuloda for having a glimpse of Lord Siva. She prevailed upon her son to remit the tax and king Siddharāja had to keep the wishes of his reverend mother<sup>2</sup>. She dedicated to the god gold equal to that of her own weight and many other things<sup>3</sup>. She also constructed Minalasur and Malav lakes for the convenience of the people.

These sacred acts made her proud and she considered herself as the greatest of all the givers of gifts. But in a dream she <sup>is said to have been</sup> told by Lord Somanātha that in his temple there was a woman who should be asked to give up her merits in favour of the queen. But the woman was reluctant to do this. The queen inquired about her merit. Then she told how she travelled on foot begging all the way and on reaching the holy place i.e. Somanātha, she took to fast which she broke on a

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1. अयापि विदारत्तीराणविकान्तिच्छटाच्छलात् ।

यो पातीव सुधासुतिक्षितश्चेताश्मनिर्बलः ॥

उपमन्यो रुदन्याया दारिद्र्योऽप्युवाचहः ।

रुद्रो रुद्रेश्वरो नाम्ना श्रीमान्कश्मीरमुखाणाम् ॥

कात्सौर्ण्यसारं सत्स्वर्णमिलं सारकः ।

शान्ताकसावप्रासादीदारश्चविहितस्तथा ॥

Ibid, VIII, 3389-91.

2. P.C., Tr. Tawney, Ch. III, p. 84.

3. Ibid.

fixed day by an oilcake received in gift. She offered <sup>one</sup> a piece of it to the god and gave <sup>the</sup> other to a guest, and the rest she took herself. She added that the queen, who was <sup>wealthy</sup> ~~self-sufficient~~ <sup>much</sup> on account of being a royal woman could offer as ~~many~~ riches as she liked, while she, being a poor woman, did all with a religious spirit, without thinking in the least of her own self-interest<sup>1</sup>. Now Mayanalladevi realised <sup>the</sup> greatness of the woman.

The inscriptions of Northern India of this period also refer to the temple building activity of the queens. An inscription (V.S. 718) refers to the erection of a temple of Viṣṇu by the wife of Varāhasiṃha during the reign of king Aparājita<sup>2</sup>. One of the inscriptions of Pratihāra king Mahipāla, dated V.S. 1012, also speaks of the construction of a Viṣṇu temple by the queen Citralekha<sup>3</sup>. The Lakkamaṇḍal Inscription informs that the queen Īśvara, <sup>the</sup> wife of a king of Jalandhara, dedicated a Śiva temple<sup>4</sup>. Many more inscriptions also repeat the same zeal of the queens in constructing <sup>the</sup> temples of various gods.

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1. Ibid, Ch. III, pp. 84-5.

2. तस्या नाम दधति यशोनतो गेहिणी

पीताकारं भवनं जकरीतु कैटमारिणी

Udaipur Ins. of Aparājita, E.I., Vol. IV, p. 31.

3. B.N. Sharma, Social Life In Northern India, Ch. V, p. 150.

4. H.G. Majumdar, Inscription of Bengal, Vol. III, p. 16.

It may be construed from some of the scenes carved on the famous Khajurāho temples that women used to go to the temples for offering worship. It is depicted in a scene of Jagadambī temple that a woman holding a plate with material of offerings, is going for worship. The presence of body-guards who are showing the way may be taken to mean that the lady may be a queen or some one of a royal lineage.<sup>1</sup> In one of the scenes of another temple some women are shown in the Anjali-hasta pose.<sup>2</sup>

It appears that majority of women were religious-minded and many of them used to perform worship in the temples. Many queens also constructed the temples of various Hindu gods and thus helped in the development of Hinduism.

#### Tāntricism

It has already been pointed out that Tāntricism gave various religious rights to women. In their secret rituals like Cakrapūjā the Tāntrics used to worship living women.<sup>3</sup> Although they were against the subjection of women, yet openly they did not oppose such a view in public.

According to Tāntricism, women had a right to initiation. The highest honour of becoming guru was bestowed upon them.

1. Ardhamandapa, Jagadambī Temple; Back inner Pradaksina, Visvanātha Temple.

2. U. Agarwal, The Khajurāho Sculptures And Their Significance, p. 23.

3. S.J. Woodroffe, Introduction to Tantrasāstra, p. 122.

Thus, besides getting initiated, they could also initiate others. Of course, certain specific qualifications were required for a woman in order to attain this honour, which are given in the Rudrayāmala. She must belong to a respectable family following Kulācara of Tāntric Sādhakas, must bear a smiling beautiful and auspicious appearance, must be decorated with ornaments, must be intelligent, calm and serene; she must also be noble, pious, chaste and must have control over her senses. She must give due respect to the elders and, above all, must have acquired knowledge of Mantras. She must ever be devoted to her Istadevata.<sup>1</sup>

Initiation of a son by his mother was eulogised, as it was believed to be eight times more fruitful than the ordinary one. Here we notice that the greatness of the mother was emphasised. It is said "O Devī ! initiation in the mother's own Mantra is indeed precious; the Sādhaka who receives it from his mother in the first place obtains enjoyment in whatsoever form he desires, and then undoubtedly becomes possessed of the knowledge of the meaning of thousands of crores of Mantras, and finally attains liberation"<sup>2</sup>.

It was ordained that a widow had no right of initiating others. But this was not the case with the widows having sons, to whom the right was not denied.

1. Arthur Avalon, Principles of Tantra, p. 544.

2. Ibid.

A faithfully and chaste wife could also initiate and by virtue of her chastity, this initiation was deemed to bring forth the eight-fold results.

We find that some women attained great knowledge of tantramātra and had complete mastery over various Siddhis. In the *Rājatarāṅginī* *Yoginī* *Bhāṭṭā* is said to have performed a *yajñā* which was attended by king *Baka*, his sons, grandsons and other persons. This rite enabled her to attain the Siddhi of *Ākāśaganana*.<sup>1</sup> The *Prthvirājaviṣṭaya* (c. 1193 A.D.) refers to *Rudrānī* who was a *yoginī*.<sup>2</sup>

Bengal has ever since been famous for the Tantrics who could perform great miracles beyond expectation. Even women were expert in this art. In the '*Manikacandra Rājargan*' the Tantric knowledge of queen *Mayanāmatī* is praised. It is said that she remained in the fire continuously for seven days and came out unharmed from it.<sup>3</sup> It is said that she could even

1. सर्व पाँडेवरी कविस्मृत्त्या रमणीयुषे।  
 कुवा कस्तुर्गते कन्यायुवक ये निरी वलियु ॥  
 तया मनोहरतेतैर्वनेग तमित्तुतिः ।  
 स पाण्डेयवक्त्रात्म्य इष्टुदुष्टी व्यम्वत ॥  
 पुमपीभ्यातेपेतः प्राक्ततम ततोमतः ।  
 ब्रह्मर्ते तया निन्दे देवीचन्द्रोपहारतयु ॥  
 कर्मना तेन प्रियव्या मीमांसमन्वयकयु।  
 नानुमुद्राव्य तयापुन्यव्यापि कथ्यते ॥

*Raj.*, I, 331-34.

2. P.V., canto VI, vs. 32-9.

3. T.C. Dasgupta, *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 154.

command the gods who were eager to fulfil the order as early as possible<sup>1</sup>.

That women used to practice Tāntric rites is evident from a drama of Bhavabhūti (8th cen A.D.). One of the lady characters of the drama is Saudāminī who is said to ~~be~~ practising the rites of Kāpālika<sup>2</sup>. She exhibits her power of tantra-mantra and yoga by showing the wonders of Ākarṣiṇī Siddhi<sup>3</sup>. By the employment of this Siddhi she was able to abduct Mādhava<sup>4</sup>. It also mentions Kapālakundalā, the follower of the Kaulācāra branch of Tāntricism. She was the disciple of Kāpālika Aghoreghaṇṭa<sup>5</sup>. She is said to have attained the Akāṣagāminī<sup>6</sup> Siddhi by her untiring efforts.

One of the historians of Sind also refers to a sorceress, who by the power of her mystic knowledge could tell the whereabouts of the lost persons<sup>7</sup>.

1. Ibid, p. 155.

2. सौदामिनो सनासादितारक्यमन्त्रसिद्धिप्रभावा शोषवती कृपास्त्रिंशत्  
पात्यति ।

M.M., Act I, p. 31.

3. गुरुक्यातपस्तन्मन्त्रयोगाभिरोगजाम् ।  
इमामाकर्षिणीं सिद्धिमात्मामि शिवाय वः ॥

Ibid, Act IX, v. 53.

4. प्रपद्यति हि महिम्ना स्वेन योगिस्त्वरीयम् ।

Ibid, p. 440.

5. नातिदुरस्पृशामवाक्षिः साकस्य मुण्डयारिणीऽघोरघण्टमानध्वस्यान्तेवाक्षिनी  
महाप्रभावा कपालमुण्डहा नाम

Ibid, Act I, p. 32.

6. Ibid, Act V, vs. 2-4.

7. Elliot, H.I., Vol. I, p. 193.

~~It is thus apparent~~ <sup>that women</sup> fully utilised the opportunity offered to them by Tāntricism and attained great knowledge of this mystic religion. The general attitude of the Tantra towards women has already been noticed in the beginning of the chapter and also in the preceding chapters<sup>1</sup>, and <sup>it</sup> need not be repeated here.

### Jainism

In the ancient Jaina texts the nature and conduct of women are much criticised. They do not hold good opinion about women<sup>2</sup>. However, it is surprising to note that since the inception of Jainism women had the right to get admission in the religious order of muns. We find that in the age of Jinesvara Suri (11th cen. A.D.) different sects had ~~altogether~~ different views about the methods of Jina-worship. One of them was of the view that women could not worship the Jina-idol as it was the symbol of wordly renunciation, while ~~the~~ <sup>an</sup> other sect not only granted the <sup>m</sup> permission to worship the idol but also opined that the song and dance <sup>were</sup> the integral parts of worship, <sup>and as such</sup> ~~so~~ the system of employing devadāsīs should not be disrupted<sup>3</sup>. The Śvetāmbara ~~Jaina-sects~~ even held the view that women could attain kaivalya or perfection<sup>4</sup>, but the Digambaras <sup>not grant</sup> ~~did confer~~ this right <sup>t</sup> ~~on~~ them<sup>5</sup>.

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1. Supra, ~~24~~ Chs. I to V.

2. J.C. Jain, Life In Ancient India As Depicted In The Jain Canons, Ch. III, p. 152.

3. K.P., Int., p. 94.

4. P.C. Tr. Tawney, p. 100, A.K. Forbes, Rasmala, Ch. X, p. 12.

5. Ibid.



In ~~this~~<sup>our</sup> period too, there were many women who took to asceticism and became nuns. Haribhadra Sūri (c. 788-820 A.D.) is said to have accepted yākinī Mahattarā as his spiritual mother<sup>1</sup>. Guṇasādhvī (10th Cen. A.D.), Mahānandāśrī Mahattarā, and Gaṇinī Vīramatī were some other nuns, who were famous for their spiritual attainments<sup>2</sup>.

Frequent references to nuns and śrāvikās are found in the Jaina literature. The pieces of evidence in the Jaina Purāṇas of Raviṣeṇa<sup>3</sup> (c. 678 A.D.), Jinasena<sup>4</sup> (c. 710-90 A.D.) and Guṇabhadra<sup>5</sup> (c. 898 A.D.) are worth noting in this connection. Siddhārṣi (c. 906 A.D.) refers to an old nun<sup>6</sup>. He also tells us

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1. P.K., Haribhadra Sūri-prabandha, p. 24.
  2. Women Saints of East And West, Ch. XVI, p. 158.
  3. Padma Purāṇa, Part III, Parva 98, vs. 94-5; Parva 86, vs. 23-4.
  4. Mahā Purāṇa, Part II, Parva 33, v. 107; Parva 46, vs. 47, 49; Parva 47, vs. 295-7.
  5. Uttara Purāṇa, Parva 49, v. 48; Parva 50, v. 63; Parva 51, v. 81; Parva 52, v. 64; Parva 53, vs. 50-1; Parva 55, v. 56; Parva 56, vs. 54-5; Parva 57, v. 59; Parva 58, vs. 48-9; Parva 59, vs. 52-3; Parva 60, v. 41; Parva 61, v. 49; Parva 62, v. 385; Parva 63, vs. 109, 112-13, 124, 493-4; Parva 64, v. 49; Parva 65, v. 43; Parva 66, v. 58; Parva 70, vs. 189-90, Parva 71, vs. 172, 244, 287, 396; Parva 72, v. 236; Parva 75, vs. 35, 69.
  6. Upamitī, Book VI, 876.

that Guṇadhāraṇa and Madanamañjarī were initiated at one and the same time<sup>1</sup>. He also reveals to us that after the passing away of her husband, Mahābhadrā became an abbess i.e. lady superior of a nunnery<sup>2</sup>. The Kathā Koṣa Prakaraṇa (C. 1051 A.D.) tells that some nuns were living together along with the monks in a Vihāra<sup>3</sup>. It also says that the wives of king Jitasātru had accepted the Jaina faith and erected many temples<sup>4</sup>. A Jaina nun is referred to in the Karakandacarīu (C. 1065 A.D.) from whom Padmavati took her 'dikṣā'. While living there, she took a vow by the side of a great and noble sage and thus got rid of all the grievances<sup>5</sup>. The same source relates that Rativagā was an ardent devotee of Lord Jina and practised austerities observing various vows and fasts<sup>6</sup>. The queens of king Karakanda were eager to practise hard vows and requested the sage to permit them. Seeing their strong intention the sage gave them the permission and the queens happily accepted the vow<sup>7</sup>. A Prakrit <sup>story</sup> work of the

1. Ibid, VIII, 1158-9.

2. Ibid, 1174.

3. K.P., Manorathakathānakam, p. 80.

4. Ibid, Kuntalā-ākhyānakam, p. 130.

5. समणिस्या वणिज्जकंतिरिह उच्चंतिरं जम लं ताव ताहि ।  
ताहि देविसिमुणिवरु कोणात्तु पामेण समणित्तु पवरु ।  
वड लयउ तारं तुरंतिरं तहो पासि मुणिदहो दुत्तरु ॥

K.C., Ch. II, v. 6, 15.

6. जावच्छ सा तहि रं कंति जिणाहो वल्लहं मुणि वरंति ।  
स्यजावलि विस्मारे कंति मुळावलिमोषियदाम दिति ।  
सुमंजलिमुमहि विप्पु रंति पल्लीकविस्मिल्लवे वरंति ।  
कंसरिक्काविस्मिल्लवे वंति जमुहारविहावहो मणु वरंति ।

Ibid, Ch. VIII, v. 17.

7. परिमुञ्जिउ मुणिवरु देहि तिव्वु वड सामिय वरुहं वरुं दिव्वु ।  
पोवकल्लिउ मुणिणा ताव तहिं वड लयउ वम्महु लयउ वेहिं ।  
तड पीरु करिक्कु दुदरु सवाउ गयउ मुरपुरवरुहो ।

Ibid, Ch. I, v. 24.

eleventh century informs us that Vasumatī was a nun<sup>1</sup>. Hemacandra, the sedate monk of the twelfth century, tells us that Sundarī, the sister of Prince Bāhubalī was anxious to get admission to the religious order. She was initiated and got a place in the group of nuns<sup>2</sup>. He also informs us that, having been influenced by the sermon of Lord Abhinandana, men and women both accepted the path of religion by becoming mendicants<sup>3</sup>.

Apart from these Jaina works some other literary works, such as the Kādambarī and the Daśakumāracarita also refer to nuns<sup>4</sup>. Besides these nuns and śrāvikās, we also find reference to such women who either consecrated Jina-idols in the temples or constructed temples and gave donations. In one of the stories of the Mahāpurāṇa of Jinasena queen Sulochanā is said to have constructed many idols of Lord Jina. After the installation ceremony was over, she used to worship them. She gave due respect and honour to the monks and used to attend religious discourses and offered worship continuously for eighty days in the month of

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1. A.M.K., Ch. II, Chandanāryakhyānaka, p. 36.

2. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. IV, pp. 265-8.

3. Ibid, Vol. II, Book II, Ch. II, p. 265.

4. Kādambarī, p. 371;

D.C., later part, Uch. VI, p. 368.

Phālguna<sup>1</sup>.

It may be construed from an inscription of the Chāhamāna dynasty that queen Māṇaladevī was an upholder of the Jaina faith<sup>also</sup>. It is recorded that her two sons along with their mother, granted two palikās for the benefit of the Jaina monks<sup>2</sup>. Two inscriptions of the time of Kelhaṇadeva speak of the grants made by queen Anala, mother of king Kelhaṇadeva, and by queen Mahābaladevī, for celebrating the festivals of Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras—~~and~~ Mahāvīra

1. काश्यन्ती जिनिन्द्राचार्यश्चित्रा मणिमयोर्वह ।  
 तातां हिरण्यमयान्मैव विश्वोपकरणान्यपि ॥  
 तत्प्रतिष्ठाभिर्णिकान्ते महापूजा प्रकुर्वती ।  
 मुहुःस्तुतिभिरर्चयामिः स्तुवती मणिकी हंतः ॥  
 ददती पात्रदानानि वानयन्ती मयामुनीन् ।  
 शृण्वती धर्ममाकर्ष्यमाक्यन्ती मुमुक्षुः ॥  
 बाप्तागमपदार्थाश्चप्राप्तस्तन्यकुत्सुदिका ।  
 अथकात्सुमनन्दीश्वरी सी मकृत्याजिनिनाम् ॥  
 विनायाष्टाहिन्की पूजाम् अम्यव्यर्चिं यथाविधि ।  
 कृतीपवासा कर्त्तव्यीश्वरीं दातुमागता ॥

Mahāpurāṇa, Vol. II, Parva 43, vs. 173-7.

2. --- श्री वात्मानान्क्य (१) श्री महाराजाधिराज (रामपा) उ (१)-  
 देव तस्य पुत्री रुद्रपालजयुत पा (ली) ताम्यां माता श्रीराज्ञीमा (न)  
 उ देवी त्या (नदु) उ (डा) गिका -

या संग ----- मलिकाव्यं - यम्मयि प्रदत्त ।

Nāḍīai Stone Inscription of Rāyapāla (V.S. 1189),

E.I., Vol. XI, p. 35.

and Śāntinātha<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>Some</sup> The South Indian inscriptions also refer to the religious attainments of many illustrious ladies who enhanced the glory of Jainism. One of the inscriptions dated C. 700 A.D. says that Rajñimati-ganti, who was a virtuous and pious nun of the Aji-gana, took to Sanyasana and went to heaven<sup>2</sup>. Kuṅkuma mahadevī, the sister of the Chālukya king Vikramāditya (C. 696-733 A.D.), is said to have constructed a magnificent Jaina temple at Purigere<sup>3</sup>. Śāntalā, the queen of the Hoysala king Viṣṇu Vardhana,

- 1 (a) ---- श्री केल्लणादेवविजयराज्ये तस्य मातुराज्ञी श्री ज्ञान (ह) देव्या  
श्री चहैरकीयमूलनायक श्री महावीर देवाय (वि) ऋदि कल्याणिकनि  
- (मि) चै राजकीय

मोगमध्यात् युगधर्माः हासल एक (:) प्रदत्तः ।

Sandarav Stone Ins. of Kelhanadeva (V.S. 1221)

E.I., Vol. XI, p. 47.

- (b) ----- श्री श्री (वि)  
पालदेवपु (त्रि) सिनाणवभीकाराज्यु -  
(त्रि) लाणणपालह राजपुत्र जयपालरा  
- श्री श्रीमहिलदेविकरितः श्री शांति-  
- नाथदेव्यात्रानिमित्तं महियाठव (त्रि)  
रषट्तरहारिमध्यात् गुजर (हृ) हार-  
जवा ग्रामपंचकुल समीप रक्त  
दानं कृतं पुण्याय ।

Latrai Stone Ins. of Kelhanadeva (V.S. 1233),

E.I., Vol. XI, p. 49.

2. E.C., Vol. II, p. 43.

3. Q.J.M.S., Vol. XLV, July 1964, p. 3.

is described in an inscription as 'the rampart to the Jaina faith<sup>1</sup>'. She constructed a Jaina temple at Sravana Belagola and gave a village for its maintenance<sup>2</sup>.

Besides these nuns and queens, mention may be made of Jakkiabbe who, in an inscription of C. 911 A.D.<sup>3</sup>, is said to have performed the vow of Sallekhanā (death by fasting).

Attimabbe was a devout devotee of Lord Jina. She was the wife of Nāgadeva, the Commander-in-Chief of the Chalukya king Taila II (C. 973-97 A.D.). It is said in the inscriptions that she donated numerous images of Lord Jina to the various temples<sup>4</sup>. She also erected many temples and granted a village for the maintenance of one of them. She is said to have helped in preparing the manuscripts of Sāntinātha Purāṇa of Ranna. It was due to her inspiration and help that he was able to write another religious book entitled 'Ajita Purāṇa'. Her acts of charity made her famous as 'Dānacintāmaṇi Attimabbe'<sup>5</sup>.

The construction of the Jaina shrines at Sravana Belagola by Lakṣmidevī, the wife of general Gaṅga-Rāj and by his mother Poḥaladevī, is recorded in an inscription of Karnataka<sup>6</sup>.

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid, pp. 60, 75.

3. Ibid, Vol. VII, pp. 130-1.

4. Q.J.M.S., Vol. XLV, July 1954, p. 7.

5. J.R.A.S., Vol. XV, 1883, p. 304.

6. E.C., Vol. II, p. 39.

Another inscription dated c. 1120 A.D. tells us that Pochikabbe performed the vow of Sallekhana<sup>1</sup>. Lakṣmīdevī too is said to have ended her life by samādhi<sup>2</sup>. An inscription dated c. 1120 A.D., informs us that Demiyakka, the wife of merchant Chamunda became a devout follower of Jainism and gave up her life by Sanyāsana<sup>3</sup>.

From the above account it may be inferred that women had a respectable place in Jainism. The Jaina literature refers to many nuns and lay-women who had ~~intimate~~ knowledge of the religion. The Svetāmbara sect even did not differentiate between men and women as far as the perfect religious liberation was concerned. This attitude of the sect, no doubt, <sup>reflects a</sup> ~~accounted for~~ high religious status of women.

### Buddhism

Gautama Buddha, it seems, did not hold a very high opinion about women. He considered them the root of all evils and was reluctant to found an order of nuns. It was the forceful argument of Ānanda that induced him to start nunneries. The indignant

1. Ibid., p. 49.

2. Ibid., p. 56.

3. Ibid., p. 57.



remark of the 'Enlightened-one' contains his views about women<sup>1</sup>.

In the monasteries women had a chance of receiving training in contemplation, serenity and right action. Their social status was also raised to a considerable extent<sup>2</sup>. Like the women-sages of the Vedic period, the illustrated Buddhist women (Therīs) also composed many religious songs which are collected in the 'Therī Gāthā'.

Some of the nuns played a great role in the reformation of Buddhism. They attained great spiritual merit for which Buddha had all praise for them. One such Therī was Dhammādinna who could not be lured by the immense wealth of her husband and renounced the world by entering the religious order. Sumedhā, Isidāsī, Soma, Anupama, Sujāta, Chapā, Kisāgautamī and Sundarī were other distinguished nuns. Some of the nuns also took the work of preaching with missionary zeal.

Caste or profession did not prove a hinderance in getting admission to the monasteries. Even prostitutes could get this opportunity. Ardhakāsī of Kasi, Padmāvati of Ujjain, and

1. "If, Ānanda, woman had not received permission to go out from the household life and enter the homeless state, under the doctrine and discipline proclaimed by the Tathāgata, then would the pure religion, Ānanda, have stood fast for a thousand years. But since, Ānanda, women now have received the permission, the pure religion, Ānanda, will not last so long, the Good Law would now stand fast for only five hundred years".

Cullavagga, p. 376.

2. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, Ch. VII, p. 209.

Ambapālī of Vesālī were some of the renowned nuns, who prior to becoming a nun<sup>p</sup> were courtesans.

Some Brāhmaṇa women, Kṣatriya princesses, daughters of ~~the~~ merchants etc. also joined the order, out of a pure love for Buddhism. The Buddhist convents gave women opportunity of becoming self-sufficient, independent and equal to men. They opened the avenues of culture and social service to them.

We find that in the beginning there used to be perfect harmony between the monks and the nuns. They lived in a peaceful, pious atmosphere. But later on, corruption and lust found their way in the monasteries and the nunneries<sup>1</sup>. The right-minded parents, who were conscious of the corrupt~~ed~~ life of nunneries, did not allow their daughters to join the order. In order to avoid such circumstances, they used to give their daughter in marriage at an early age<sup>2</sup>. Perhaps it was due to this reason that the orders of nuns declined in the country. <sup>The</sup> Chinese pilgrim<sup>in</sup> of the fifth and the seventh century<sup>do not</sup> mentions their<sup>in</sup> presence.

But<sup>/</sup> this does not imply that the knowledge of Buddhist philosophy was denied to women. Bāṇa informs us that when Rājyasrī showed her keenness to enter the order, king Harṣa requested Divākaramitra to teach her Buddhist philosophy<sup>at</sup> in his own home and said that he along with her would enter the order

1. Ibid, p. 210.

2. Supra, Ch. I, pp. <sup>53</sup>49-50.

after the completion of his work<sup>1</sup>. A reference to Buddhist nuns is also found in the Kādambarī<sup>2</sup> (7th Cen. A.D.). Saṅkṛtyāyanī<sup>3</sup>, Kamandakī<sup>4</sup> and Dharmaraksita<sup>5</sup> are the Buddhist nuns referred to in the Priyadarsika of king Harṣa (7th Cen. A.D.), Mālatīmādhavam of Bhavabūti (8th Cen. A.D.) and the Daśakumāracarita of Dandin (8th Cen. A.D.) respectively. As has already been said, Buddhism in this age had become dominated by Tāntricism. Various Vajracāryas and Siddhacāryas developed this religion. The inclusion of some female names<sup>6</sup> in the famous list

1. अपप्रभृति याक्यं जी लंघति प्रतिजानासु, जाश्वासयति च तातविनाशुसिताः  
प्रजाः, तावदेनामनुगृह्णन्तु तन्मन्त्रतः काव्यामिश्रं धर्म्याभिः, कुलप्रतिबीजविद्यायि-  
मिरुपदेशश्च वरजीभिः, शीलपञ्चमदायिनी मिश्रं धर्मज्ञानाभिः, सौम्यप्रहाणास्तुमुतेरश्च  
सायागतिःदंष्ट्रैः । अस्मत्पाश्चाप्यायिनीमेव प्रतिबीज्यमानाभिष्ठाभि । इयं तु  
गर्होष्यति मयैव स्वं समाप्तकुल्येन काणायाणि ।

H.C., Uch. VIII, p. 408.

2. V.S. Agarwal, Kādambarī - Ek Saṅskṛtika Adhyayana, p. 206.

3. Priya, Act III, p. 41.

4. M.M., Act I, p. 17.

5. D.C. later part, Uch. II, p. 178.

6. The names of four yoginis - Maṇibhadra (65), Mekhala-pā (66), Maṅkhala-pā (67), Lakṣaṇīṅkarā (82) are found in the list;

cf. ~~as given by~~ Lal Mani Joshi, Studies In The Buddhistic Culture of India, Appendix 5, p. 453.

Instead of Maṅkhala-pā (67) the name of Kanakhala-pā is given in the list given by B.N. Sharma; ~~as~~ Social Life In Northern India, Appendix VIII, p. 352.

of eighty four Siddhas suggests that some women acquired proficiency in various siddhis. Among them Lakṣmīnīkāra was the sister of king Indrabhūti (8th Cen. A.D.) who was one of the Siddhas. It is said that she was the originator of the Sahajayāna cult<sup>1</sup>. Yoginī Lakṣmīnīkāra occupies an important place in the history of Vajrayāna as her doctrine of 'Advayasiddhi' is said to have been a new attainment<sup>2</sup>. Those who believed in it were called Sahajayānist<sup>3</sup>. Lakṣmīnīkāra was of the view that there was no need to worship the idols of gods nor to undergo any hardship by observing fasts and various rites. What was to be worshipped was one's own body which was the abode of all the gods<sup>4</sup>. Her declaration that women were the manifestation of Prajñā in restraint and so they should not be seen with disdainful eye, reflects the attitude of this sect towards women. She also laid emphasis on the significance of the guru<sup>5</sup>.

A study of the lives of various Siddhācāryas shows that in most of the cases a female touch was responsible for

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1. G.C. Pande, *Bauddha Dharma Ke Vikāsa Kā Itihāsa*, Ch.XIII, p.470.

2. *Sādhana-mālā*, Ed. B. Bhattacharya, Int., p. 54.

3. *Ibid*, p. 55.

4. न कष्टकल्पां कुर्यात् नोपवासो न च श्रियाम् ।

स्नानं तीर्थं न वैवात्र ग्रामर्क्षविषर्जनम् ॥

न चापि कन्दर्पदेवान् काष्ठपाशाणामुष्मयान् ।

पुमानस्यैव कायस्य कुर्यान्नित्यं सप्ताहिनः ॥

पुष्पदेवतान् तेन वैलस्यन् तेष्वपाकीः ॥

*Ibid*, p. 55.

5. *Ibid*, p. 56.

enabling them to attain a particular Siddhi. Sarahapā (C. 633 A.D.), one of the renowned Siddhācārya<sup>1</sup> is said to have attained Siddhi after having performed the mahamudrā ritual with a daughter of an archer<sup>1</sup>. There is divergence of opinion about his nativity, but it is said that he attained the Siddhi in Maharashtra<sup>2</sup>. It is also presumed that due to this event he came to be known as 'Sarahapa'<sup>3</sup>. Sahaja-yoginī cintā, (C. 765 A.D.) the disciple of Darikapa belonged to the Vijñānavādin school<sup>4</sup>. According to her, 'citta' or mind was the root of all happiness as well as sorrow. One who had realised this truth and had control over his citta was deemed to be fit to achieve enlightenment or Buddhahood. She further preached that only that person could be called Vajrasattva who was able to bring into limelight the manifestations of the mind<sup>5</sup>. All these ideas are found in her work 'Vyaktabhāvanūgata-tattva-siddhi'<sup>6</sup>. About Kambalāmbarapā it is said that when Mantrāvatī, a Siddha yoginī and applied mārana mantra on him, he took the form of a blanket but the yoginī and her friends devoured that blanket; however, no harm could be inflicted on his body<sup>7</sup>. Probably he belonged to Orissa

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1. Dharmavira Bharati, Siddha Sāhitya, Ch. I, p. 50.

2. Ibid, p. 50.

3. Ibid, p. 49.

4. Sādhanaśāla, Ed. B. Bhattacharya, Int., p. 58.

5. Ibid, p. 59.

6. Ibid, pp. 58-9.

7. Dharmavir Bharati, Siddha Sāhitya, Ch. I, pp. 52-3.

or Udyāna<sup>1</sup>. Kukkuripā (about 10th Cen. A.D.), another Siddhacārya of Bengal is said to have assumed that name because in Lumbinivana he obtained the Mahāmudrā Siddhi from a woman, who in her previous birth was a bitch<sup>2</sup>. In the Mystic Tales of Lāmā Tārānāth, it is said that "he lived with Vajrayoginī who looked like a she-dog before the world"<sup>3</sup>. Yoginī Mekhalā and Kanakhālā or Bandhe were among the disciples of Kṛṣṇacārī<sup>4</sup>. The names of yoginī Menakā and Dinakara <sup>ore</sup> were also famous in the history of <sup>Tantric</sup> ~~Mahāyāna~~ Buddhism<sup>5</sup>. In one of the mystic tales of Lāmā Tārānātha we find reference to the country of the Dākinīs<sup>6</sup> and frequent references to the miracles performed by them, which suggest that they were well-adept in various siddhis<sup>7</sup>. There were Tīrthika and Bauddha-Dākinīs in that country<sup>8</sup>. But whether the Dākinīs were living-beings is doubtful, as they <sup>were sometimes</sup> are regarded to be evil spirits.

It has already been said that Buddhism was lingering in Kashmir in this period<sup>9</sup>. Most of the kings of Kashmir patronised

1. Ibid, p. 52.

2. Ibid, p. 53.

3. Mystic Tales of Lāmā Tārānātha, Ed. B.N. Dutt, Ch. VI, p. 60.

4. Mystic Tales of Lāmā Tārānātha, Ed. B.N. Dutt, Ch. IV, p. 40.

5. Ibid, Ch. VII, pp. 89, 104.

6. Ibid, p. 24.

7. Ibid, pp. 24-7, 42.

8. Ibid, p. 25.

9. Supra, p. 223.

this religion and their queens also did not lag behind in making it a popular faith. Kalhana says that Amṛtaprabhā, the queen of king Meghavāhana, erected a very big vihāra for the foreign monks<sup>1</sup>. Yūkadevī too constructed a spacious vihāra in which there were separate arrangements for the residence of the monks, men, women and animals<sup>2</sup>. His other wives Indradevī, Khādanā, Samā etc. also built vihāras<sup>3</sup>. It seems that the wives of king Meghavāhana tried to surpass one another in the race of building vihāras. Anāṅgalekhā, the queen of king Durlabhavardhana (c. 600-36 A.D.), is credited with the construction of Anāṅgabhavana vihāra<sup>4</sup>. It is said that the vihāra erected by Ratnādevī, the wife of king Jayasīma, was considered best among the existing vihāras<sup>5</sup>. The Chanikūṇa vihāra was built by Sussalā<sup>6</sup>. Cintā, the wife of Jayasīma's commander Udaya, also constructed a vihāra by the side of the river Bitastā. It consisted of five

1. भोगाय देशमिदं पूर्णं बलमास्यामुत्प्रभा ।

विहारमुच्चैःसुतमकनात्यमकारयत् ॥

Rāj., III, 9.

2. कं नृकनी राज्ञी युक्तेष्वभियावतुः ।

विहारमुत्पुताकारं सपत्नीस्पर्धायीषता ॥

वर्षं यदभियावः शिवाचारास्तत्रार्पितास्तथा ।

वर्षं गौहस्त्यगृह्यारिक्तस्त्रीपुत्रपुत्रिभ्यः ॥

Ibid., III, 11-12-

3. अयन्देवीममनमिन्द्रदेव्यभिया व्यवातु ।

विहारं सक्तुः शार्तं स्तुर्पं मुपप्रिया परा ॥

अन्याभिः साधनासम्प्राप्नुताभिर्निजात्यया ।

देवीभिस्तस्य महिता विहाराः बहवः कृताः ॥

Ibid., III, 13-14.

4. Ibid., IV, 3.

5. रत्नादेव्या दुर्गारुडमर्तुबलमतामुषः । सर्वप्रतिष्ठाप्रतिष्ठत्वं विहारः प्रथमं मतः ॥

Ibid., VIII, 2402.

6. Ibid., VIII, 2415.



'bhavanas' which were like the five raised fingers of 'Dharma'<sup>1</sup>. These vihāras must have contributed much to the enhancement of the religion, as they were the centres of Buddhism. Thus, we may say that in Kashmir Buddhism owed much to the royal women.

The undated Sārnāth inscription reveals that Kumāradevī, the queen of Gāhaḍavāla king Govindacandra (C. 1100-70 A.D.) constructed a vihāra and restored the idol of Dharma-Cakra-Jina<sup>2</sup>.

It is thus apparent that wherever Buddhism was prevalent, either in its Tāntric or earlier forms, women must have enjoyed higher status as this religion made no distinction between the sexes in the field of <sup>religion.</sup> ~~attaining~~ <sup>noticed</sup> ~~Siddhis~~. It has been ~~remarked~~ that wherever Buddhism still lingers as in Burma, Kashmir and other neighbouring hills, women enjoy a superior status<sup>3</sup>.

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1. उद्यस्य प्रिया विन्तामिषाना कम्पनापतेः ।  
 पुलिनीर्वा विन्तायाविहारेण व्यमुग्यतु ॥  
 प्रासादपर्वकयाबाधविहारस्थितः करः ।  
 उदस्त इव धीमता प्रीतिगान्धर्विकः ॥

Ibid, VIII, 3352-3.

2. E.I., Vol. IX, pp. 319 ff.

3. R.S. Pandit, River of kings, Int., p. 33.

Chapter VII

Women's Right To Property

## Chapter VII

### Women's Right To Property

The proprietary position which women occupied in Hindu Law is not only an index of Hindu civilisation but is also a correct criterion of the culture of the Hindus<sup>1</sup>. During our period of study the proprietary position of women appears to have been much better than what we find in earlier ages. The theory of perpetual subjection of women did not constitute an obstacle in this matter<sup>2</sup>. According to U.N. Ghoshal, "a distinct improvement of their status is observable in respect of their rights of property"<sup>3</sup>.

#### Theory of Joint-Ownership of the Couple

The theory of joint-ownership of the couple may be traced back to the <sup>V</sup>edic age. According to this theory, the husband and the wife were regarded as the joint owners of the household and the property. But women were nominally benefitted by it; they were only entitled to get maintenance from their husbands. The lawgivers instructed the husband to make proper arrangement for the wife's maintenance, if he had to proceed abroad<sup>4</sup>. A third share of the property was to be given to the first wife in case of ~~the~~ second marriage<sup>5</sup>.

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1. Roop L. Chaudhary, Hindu Woman's Right to Property, ~~Ch. I,~~ pp. 4-5.
  2. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, ~~Ch. II,~~ p. 331.
  3. The Struggle For Empire, Ch. XVII, p. 496.
  4. Supra, Ch. III, pp. 117-8.
  5. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch. VIII, p. 213.

It is interesting to note that Mamu did not ascribe any share to the wife in her husband's property during his life time; only the right of maintenance was allowed to the wife by the great lawgiver. In his view, a wife, a son and a slave could not have any property and the wealth which they earned, belonged to those to whom they themselves belonged<sup>1</sup>. Medhātithi and Kullūka were of the opinion that it should not be taken to mean that the enumerated persons could not possess any property: the statement only indicates<sup>2</sup> their dependence on their masters<sup>2</sup>. Their interpretation seems proper as later on Mamu himself had laid down that the women could not take anything either from the family property or from their own property without the consent of their husbands<sup>3</sup>.

Yājñavalkya propounded that if a father distributed his property in his life-time, his wife who had received no *strīdhana* was also eligible to get the same part as was given to the son. Visvarūpa (C. 750-850 A.D.) and Viṣṇanesvara, the

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1. Mamu, VIII, 416.

2. अस्ति वा स्त्रीणां स्वयं पत्यवानुत्पन्नं त्र्यति 'पत्नी वेपारिणाह्यस्यस्येश' इत्यादि  
भृत्यो निराह-काः स्युः । पारतन्त्र्यविधानमेतत् । अस्यां मृत्युशाय्यां न स्त्रीभिः  
स्वातन्त्र्येण यत्रकश्चिन्नं विनियोज्यं । ----- अन्ये तु मन्यन्ते मायापुत्र-  
ग्रहणादात्तार्थं तस्य कृतकमुधारार्थं आपदि तासां वनग्रहणीन विधिकित्सितव्यं  
मरुतैव हि तत्स्युः ।

Medh. on Mamu, VIII, 417.

एतच्च मायादीनां पारतन्त्र्यप्रदर्शनार्थपर

Kullūka on Mamu, VIII, 416.

3. Mamu, IX, 199.

4. Yāj., II, 115.

commentators of Yājñavalkya, also concurred with his view<sup>1</sup>. It may be pointed out here that the wife was not free to use the family property according to her own wishes, instead she had to take the permission of her husband in doing so<sup>2</sup>.

It is thus obvious that the wife had no right to spend anything out of the family property without the express consent of her husband and her ownership over it was nominal. Thus, the theory of joint-ownership was written in Law only; in actual practice the husband was considered to be the sole authority in the matter of property<sup>3</sup>.

### Stridhana

But it does not mean that women had no right to any kind of property. In the Smritis we come across a peculiar term

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1. सनाशदानपत्नी प्रीतिमर्तुकाः पुत्रपौत्रपत्न्यः स्वपत्न्यश्च मर्तुमागार्हाः कार्याः  
यासां मर्ता स्वशुरेण वा स्वयं वा स्त्रीर्धनं न दत्तु । यदा यासां स्त्रीर्धनं  
न दत्तं ताः स्त्रीर्धनसमाशिकाः कार्याः । ----- स्वत्येऽपि सनाशत्येनैव ।

Visva. on Yaj., II, 119.

यदा स्वेच्छया पिता सवनिव गुप्तान् समविभागिनः करोति तदा पत्न्यश्च  
पुत्रसमाशिकाः करीयाः । यासां पत्नीनां मर्ता स्वशुरेण वा स्त्रीर्धनं न दत्तं ।  
दत्तं तु स्त्रीर्धनं कर्त्तुं पश्यति न दत्तं त्वयं प्रकल्पयेदिति ॥

Viṣ. on Yaj., II, 115.

2. तस्मादुपैरिच्छया भाययात्रापि द्रव्यविभागी भवत्येव न स्वेच्छया ।

Viṣ. on Yaj., II, 52.

3. Cf. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch. VIII, p. 217.

'Strīdhana' or 'woman's separate property' which denotes that women did possess some exclusive property. It would not be improper to say that the custom of bride price was responsible for the origin of Strīdhana<sup>1</sup>, out of the natural affection for the daughter, the parents used to assign a part or sometimes the whole of the bride-price to her to be enjoyed by her separately.

We find that even in the Vedic age, when no bride-price was paid, women used to obtain some gifts from their parents. It was declared that the wife was the sole possessor of these gifts, termed as 'Pāriṇāhya'<sup>2</sup>. No clear definition of Strīdhana is given by the early jurists like Āpastamba and Baudhāyana. But, Manu clearly remarked that the Strīdhana was of six varieties - the gifts given to a maiden before the nuptial fire, the gifts given to her at the time of bridal procession, the gifts given as a token of love and what <sup>was</sup> given by her father, mother and brother<sup>3</sup>. Kullūka, the commentator of Manu accepted the classification of Strīdhana as given by Manu and Kātyāyana<sup>4</sup>.

1. Ibid.

2. पत्नी वै पारिणाह्यस्य इति ।

T.S., VI, 2, 1, 1.

3. Manu, IX, 194.

4. विवाहकाले अग्निसन्निधौ यत्पित्रादिदत्तं तदध्यग्नि स्त्रीकृतम् । तदाहः कात्यायनः । विवाहकाले यत्स्त्रीया दायते ह्यग्निसन्निधौ । तदध्यग्निकृतं सङ्घमिः स्त्रीकृतं परिकीर्तितम् । यत् पितृगृहादिभिरङ्गैर्न नीयमानया तत्त्वं तदध्यावाहनिकं । तया च कात्यायनः । यत्पुनर्लभ्यते नारी नीयमाना तु पितृकात् । अध्यवाहनिकं नाम तत्स्त्रीकृतमुदाहृतम् । यत् प्रीतिहेतुर्गोष्ठा मन्त्रादिदत्तं तया भ्रात्रा पित्रा च सम्यान्तरे यद्वत् एवं षट्प्रकारकं स्त्रीकृतं स्मृतम् ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 194.

Early medieval jurists have enlarged the scope of Strīdhana. Devala (C. 600-900 A.D.) had defined it thus: "Food and vesture, ornaments, perquisites and wealth received by a woman from a kinsman, are her own property<sup>1</sup>". Viññāneśvara (C. 1080-1100 A.D.) had widened the scope of the woman's property to a large extent. He took advantage of the word 'ādya' given by Yājñavalkya and took it to mean all the estate she acquired by inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure and finding<sup>2</sup>. Commenting on the verse he says: "That which Pitṛmātṛpatibhrātrdattam, was given by the father, the mother, the husband, as also by a brother, as also that which was presented (to the bride) by the maternal uncles and the rest at the time of the wedding, before the nuptial fire; and ādhivedanikam, that which was presented to her on her husband's marriage to another wife, as a gratuity on account of supersession "let him give to a wife who has been superseded etc.; and as indicated by the word ādya, any other, also property which she may have acquired by inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure or finding, are denominated by Manu and the rest "woman's property<sup>3</sup>".

1. वृद्धिप्राप्तं भुक्तं लाभश्च स्त्रीकं भवेत् ।

Devala quoted in K.K.V., p. 693.

2. जामशब्देन रिक्तसंविभागपण्डितहासिमप्राप्तेतु स्त्रीकं मन्वादिभिरुक्तम् ।

Viñ. on Yāj., II, 143.

3. Viñ. on Yāj., II, 143.—

Yāj., Tr. J.R. Charpure, p. 1126.



Such an extension of the scope of Strīdhana as to include all her estate, really shows the generosity of the commentator towards women. But, it is doubtful whether the term 'ādyam' really denotes what was interpreted by Vijñānesvara. The view of Altekar seems quite convincing in this regard. He is of the opinion that if by the term 'ādyam' Yājñavalkya meant the items like inheritance, purchase and partition etc., he could have clearly mentioned them instead of leaving them obscure in the garb of 'ādyam'. The disputed term was obviously used to express items like bride-price, gifts from the relations and presents received after the marriage, as is quite clear from the import of the next line<sup>1</sup>.

Whether the term itself occurred in the original text of Yājñavalkya, is also a matter of doubt. Visvarūpa (C. 750-850 A.D.), Aparārka (C. 1125-30 A.D.) and Jīmūtavāhana (C. 1090-1130 A.D.) read it as 'adhivedanikamchaiva' instead of 'adhivedanikādyam'. Aparārka, however, accepted the rendering and interpretation as suggested by Vijñānesvara. Jolly observes: "However, Vijñānesvara's theory does not receive more striking confirmation from any other quarter than from Aparārka's commentary of the Yājñavalkya Smṛti. Aparārka had that identical reading chaiva in the text of Yājñavalkya before him which caused Jīmūtavāhana to put forth his restrictive definition of the term Strīdhana. Nevertheless, what Aparārka says about the meaning of this reading is this: 'the particle cha has the same meaning as Adi etc. Therefore, it is used in order to include other species of Strīdhana, such

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1. A.S. Altekar, "The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch. VIII, p. 222.

as are mentioned in the following texts: <sup>the</sup> he wives shall obtain an equal share; the mother also shall receive an equal share; the fourth part of their own share let the daughters divide the nuptial present of their mother; this and whatever else may become the property of a woman is denominated woman's property by Manu and other ancient sages<sup>1</sup>. These remarks prove that Aparārka, though he has followed a different reasoning, managed to arrive at the same conclusion as Viññāneśvara by a different process of reasoning. What is particularly important, he expressly includes in the term Strīdhana all property obtained by partition or inheritance by a woman whether in her maidenhood, during coverture, or as a widow. It should also be mentioned that Aparārka, in commenting on the text of Kātyāyana regarding the maximum amount of donations of Strīdhana, says <sup>that</sup> it relates to donations made in the course of one year. This wide interpretation, which has been adopted by most other commentators, tends to illustrate the prevailing tendency to extend the original sphere of Strīdhana property<sup>1</sup>.

Jīmūtavāhana, the leading authority of <sup>the</sup> Bengal school, did not concur with Viññāneśvara. He was of the opinion that the texts of the various sages merely explain <sup>ed</sup> the separate property of women. Only that property over which the woman has full right to give, sell or use independently of her husband's control, must be termed her peculiar property<sup>2</sup>. He quoted Kātyāyana's views in this regard: 'The wealth, which is earned by mechanical

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1. J. Jolly, Tagore Law Lectures, pp. 250-1.

2. Dāya, Tr. S.S. Setlur, Sec. I, 18-19.

arts or which is received through affection from any other, is always subject to her husband's dominion. The rest is pronounced to be the woman's property<sup>1</sup>.

We may point out here that this definition does not clarify as to over what property a woman could exercise her control. It may further be construed that immovable property, although given by the husband to his wife, could not be included in the woman's separate property as a verse of Nārada quoted in the Dāyabhāga, says that barring immovable property a wife could independently use or give the property acquired from her husband<sup>2</sup>. Then Jīmūtavāhana says that the property inherited by a woman either from her husband, her father, her son or other relations, must not be termed as Strīdhana<sup>3</sup>. He interpreted the term 'Ehartṛdāya' of the Nārada<sup>2A</sup> text as the donation of the husband<sup>4</sup>. He further opined that what was given by the strangers before the nuptial fire only, and at the time of bridal procession by the parents and their kindred, was called woman's peculiar property<sup>5</sup>. As regards the term *sulka*, he agreed with whatever had been said by Kātyāyana and Vyāsa. According to the former, "whatever has been received as a price of workman (*Karmanām*) on houses, furnitures and carriages, milking vessels and

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1. Ibid.

2. Dāya., Ch. IV, Sec. I, 23.

3. Ibid, Ch. IV, Sec. I, 11-12<sup>3</sup>; Ch. XI, Sec. I, 58, Sec. II, 30-31.

4. Ibid, Ch. IV, Sec. I, 7-8.

5. Ibid, Ch. IV, Sec. I, 5-6.

ornaments<sup>1</sup>" is *śulka*. Vyāsa defines *śulka* thus "What is given to bring the bride to her husband's house<sup>2</sup>". Jīmūtavāhana explained the former's dictum<sup>3</sup> as *śulka* or fee was the price of labour which a woman received by the artistes constructing a house or executing some other work for sending her husband or some other persons (of her family) to work with them<sup>3</sup>.

In this way we may say that unlike Vijñāneśvara Jīmūta-vāhana did not include inherited property in *Strīdhana*. It may be pointed out that, as regards *Strīdhana*, some commentators and jurists favour the view of Mitākṣarā while others disagree with it. The divergence in the opinions suggests that there was no uniformity of views in this regard and the entire society could not follow any definite system in recognising the scope of *Strīdhana*. Sometimes the texts of various lawgivers are not explicitly clear on the subject. However, generally speaking, the term *Strīdhana* refers to that property over which a woman had more or less absolute control in normal times.

#### The Power of Disposal over *Strīdhana*

According to Manu, those relatives who appropriated the property of a woman on the pretext of giving protection, were condemnable and were liable to be punished by the king<sup>4</sup>.

1. Dāya., Ch. IV, Sec. III, 19.

Cf. G.D. Banerji, Hindu Law of Marriage And *Strīdhana*, p. 28.

2. Ibid, 19-21.

3. Dāya., Ch. IV, Sec. III, 20.

4. Manu, III, 52, VIII, 29, IX, 200.

Medhātithi<sup>1</sup> and Kullūka<sup>2</sup> were also of the same view. But this does not mean that the woman had an absolute power over her Strīdhana, as we have already noticed that a woman could not hoard anything even from her own property without the permission of her husband<sup>3</sup>. Hindu jurists of our time held the view that no body other than her husband, could lay hand upon her property and that too in an extreme distress. If he took the property on

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1. ते पापाः तस्मिन्प्रतिनिष्ठायावर्णादनीगतिं नरकं यान्ति

Medh. on Manu, III, 52.

बान्धवानां स्त्रीधनमपहरताम्यं वीरदण्डः । अस्वतन्त्रिणा स्त्रीकिं ददाति किं वा भुङ्क्ते क्यमत्र स्वाभिने इति अवोरासंभ्या वीरदण्डो विधीयते । जीवन्तीनां तासां स्वबान्धवा देवरादयस्तदनं ये ह्येतुतांश्चिन्तात् पृथिवीपति निर्गृह्णीयात् ।

on Manu, VIII, 29.

2. ये बान्धवाः पतिपित्रादयः कृच्छ्रदुष्टादिकानि गृह्णान्ति नारो स्त्रीयानानि अश्वादीनि वस्त्रं चैति प्रदर्शयार्थं सकैव धनं ग्राह्यं ते गृह्णानाः पापकारिणी नरकं गच्छन्ति ।

Kullūka on Manu, III, 52.

क्यमत्रान्तराधिकारिणी रक्ष्याम हर्षं धनमित्यादि व्याधिन ये बान्धवास्तासां जीवन्तीनां तदनं गृह्णान्ति तात् वक्ष्यमाण वीरदण्डेन पार्थिवी राजा दण्डयेत् ।

on Manu, VIII, 29.

मर्तारि जीयति तत्संभताभिराडिंकारः स्त्रीभिर्भुतः तस्मिन्भुते विभागकाले तं पुत्रादयो न पौरान् पञ्चानाः पाप्मिनी भवन्ति ॥

on Manu, IX, 200.

3. Supra, pp. 260

false implication, without any reason he had to return it with interest<sup>1</sup>. However, the Agni Purāṇa says that if a husband took the woman's property in the time of famine, there was no need to repay it<sup>2</sup>. Viṣṇūśekhara was also of the same view. He enumerated the calamities when a husband could appropriate the woman's property and was not liable to refund it<sup>3</sup>. It is surprising that the commentator who had so widened the scope of Strīdhana as to include all kinds of property in it, was silent about the woman's authority over it.

Jīmatavāhana, the celebrated author of the Dāyabhāga, gave an absolute domination to a woman over her Strīdhana<sup>4</sup>. It is interesting to note here that seconding the views of Kātyāyana<sup>5</sup> the author remarked that over the property received as gifts from the strangers or earned by mechanical arts, a husband possessed absolute control and could appropriate it whether the distress existed or not<sup>6</sup>. Kātyāyana<sup>had</sup> divided

1. वृधिरामरणं शुल्कं लाभश्च स्त्रीकर्म भवेत् ।

भोक्त्री च स्वयमेवेदं पतिनाहृत्यनापि ॥

मृणा मोदी च भोगे च स्त्रियै दद्यात्सवृद्धिकाम् ।

Devala quoted in K.K.V., pp. 685-6.

2. Agni Purāṇa, Tr. M.N. Dutt, p. 925.

3. दुर्मित्री कुटुम्बभरणार्थं कर्मकार्यं अवश्यकर्तव्यं व्याधी च संप्रतिरोक्ते बन्दिग्रहणा-  
निग्रहादी इत्यान्तररहितः स्त्रीकर्मं गृह्यान् कर्ता न पुनर्दातुमर्हति । प्रकारान्तरिणा-  
पहरवन्द्यात् । कर्तव्यतिरेकेण जीवन्त्याः स्त्रिया कर्म केनापि दद्यादेन न  
ग्रहीतव्यम् ।

Vij. on Yāj., II, 147.

4. Dāya., Ch. IV, Sec. I, 18.

5. Supra, pp. 265-6.

6. Dāya., Ch. IV, Sec. I, 20.



Strīdhana into two categories - Sandāyika and Asandāyika. The Sandāyika consisted of free gifts of affection received from her father's house and a woman had full authority to sell or donate them even though it consisted of immovable property<sup>1</sup>.

The rest of Strīdhana came under the category of asandāyika.

Lakṣmīdhara (C. 1100-30 A.D.) also <sup>accepted the division of Strīdhana</sup> ~~concurred with Kātyāyana as~~ <sup>as sandāyika and asandāyika<sup>2</sup></sup> ~~far as the right of woman over sandāyika gifts was concerned~~. <sup>According to him, the</sup>

~~she~~ (possessed the right of donation over the gifts (movables only) received from her husband<sup>3</sup>).

Devanabhaṭṭa (C. 1200-1225) suggested that the nature of 'distress' must be such that could not be overcome without the help of Strīdhana<sup>4</sup>. Thus he prescribed the take-over of woman's property only in the case of extreme necessity. He was of the view that from the fact that the husband had to repay the principal even if he obtained the permission of the wife, it is evident that he could neither exercise independent power nor claim ownership over her separate property. It must be inferred that the wife, by reason of her marriage, had the right of ownership over her husband's property, though not of an independent nature, while the husband could not claim the

1. Kātyāyana quoted in Dāya., Ch. IV, Sec. I, 21.

2. स्नातापितृभ्यो यत्स्वम् कर्तुं तत् 'सौदायिकम्' । तत्र च 'स्यावीर्ये'ऽपि स्त्रियाः दानादिषु स्वातन्त्र्यम् ।

3. कर्तृदिषु तु स्यादातिरिक्तं च येषु दानादिष्वधिकारः ॥

K.K.V., p. 685.

4. संप्रतिरोक्ते क्लदानं किं निवारयितुमशक्यम् ।

S.C.V., p. 658.



same right over his wife's property<sup>1</sup>. It may further be pointed out that the right to use the property in distress was given only to the husband and not to any other member of his family in the same circumstances<sup>2</sup>.

Various definitions and implications of Stridhana as given by Hindu jurists, reveal that a widow had more powers over her Stridhana than what was exercised by a woman during coverture. During widowhood whatever a woman acquired by her skill and labour or by presentations from non-relatives, came under the caption of Stridhana and she had full control over it, while during coverture the husband was the sole authority in this regard. It may be understood that when the control of her husband could not be affected, she had the right of exercising full control over such property.

The restrictions on the use of property depended upon the nature of gifts and the status of women in relation to marriage. It is evident that some sort of property was under the full control of the wife, while over certain other things she had not the same control and over some other sorts of property she could exercise her right only during coverture<sup>3</sup>.

1. पुरुषाणां तु स्त्रीष्वेव सर्वज्ञास्वातन्त्र्यमेव ।

Ibid, p. 656.

2. ज्ञापयिषु पतिरेवाहंति स्त्रीष्वं पौत्रं नान्य इति

Ibid, p. 657.

3. G.D. Banerji, Hindu Law of Marriage And Stridhana, pp. 323-4.

We have already seen that the highest importance was given to the husband, who was virtually the god for the wife. Every action of hers must have had the sanction of her lord. In the matter of property also, we see that even her exclusive property known as sandāyika could be used by the husband in case of extreme necessity.

#### Strīdhana promised by the husband

Apart from what was given by her husband, a woman was also entitled to get what was promised by him during his life-time but was not given. It was ordained by Devala that the promised property must necessarily be paid by his sons like his debts.

#### Chastity and Strīdhana

A text of Kātyāyana, cited by almost all the leading commentaries, says that if a woman did not remain faithful and obedient to her husband, she was considered unworthy to claim Strīdhana<sup>1</sup>. Devanabhaṭṭa's generosity is expressly evident in his interpretation of the text of Kātyāyana. In his view an unchaste and disobedient woman did not forfeit her right to Strīdhana; only the right to alienate the property was denied to her<sup>2</sup>.

1. उपकाराश्रयायुक्ता निर्लज्जा चार्यनाशिका ।

अपिचाररता या च स्त्रीर्ज न च साऽहंति ॥

Kātyāyana quoted in K.K.V., p. 687; S.C.V., p. 659.

2. स्वच्छा विनियोज्यमिति शेषः ।

S.C.V., p. 659.

### Succession to Strīdhana

As regards the succession to Strīdhana, the dictum of Manu was that after the death of the mother, all the full sisters and brother should equally divide her estate. The daughters of the daughters should also get something out of it. It was further ordained that if the woman was sonless and had only daughters, then her estate should devolve upon the unmarried daughters only. The property was to go to her husband if the issueless woman was married according to any of the first five forms of marriage; and if she was married according to the remaining three forms, her parents took her property<sup>1</sup>. Kullūka, while commenting on the verse of Manu (IX, 131), remarked that the unmarried daughters and not the sons, should take the Strīdhana of their mother and to support his views he quoted the injunctions of Gautama<sup>2</sup>. Elsewhere he opined that the married daughter should get as much as was equal to the fourth part of the brother's share<sup>3</sup>. As far as the grand-daughters were concerned, the preference was given to the married ones who received only a small share as a token of love<sup>4</sup>.

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1. Manu, IX, 131, 192, 196-7.

2. मातुर्पदं तत्स्युर्मातुर्मातुः कुमारीमातुः स्यान्म पुत्राणां तन्मानः । कुमारी-  
चानुडाभिष्टा । तथा गीतमः । स्त्रीर्जदुष्टिणामदधानामप्रतिष्ठितानां च  
वपुत्रस्य च मातामहस्य दोहित्र एव प्रकृतत्वात्पौत्रिण्यः समर्गं कं गृहणीयात् ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 131.

3. ततश्चानुडानां पितृवत्त्वबोधानां मातुर्मातुः प्रात्रा स्वान्मपुर्मागोदयः ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 192.

4. तासां दुष्टिणां या वृद्धा दुष्टिरस्ताभ्यो पि मातामही ज्ञात्वा तासां पुत्रा  
भवति तथा प्रीत्या किञ्चिदातव्यम् ॥

Ibid.

The *Mitākṣarā* laid down the rule that after the death of a woman who had neither daughters, nor daughter's sons, nor son, nor son's son; her property should go to her kinsmen<sup>1</sup>. If such a woman was married by any of the *Brāhma*, *Daiva*, *Ārṣa* and *Prājāpatya* rites, her separate property went to her husband, and on his failure the nearest sapindas were entitled to get it. If she was married according to the remaining forms of marriage, it went to her parents in the first place; their next of kin got it on their failure<sup>2</sup>. *Vijñāneśvara* further opined that if a woman had children, then on her demise, the daughters were to get her property. But the unmarried daughters were preferred to the married ones. Amongst the married daughters, those who were unprovided preceded the provided ones<sup>3</sup>. At another place he ordained that the sons had to repay the debt of the mother. After this, the remaining property was to be given to the daughters and in the absence of daughters the sons were eligible to get it<sup>4</sup>.

1. स्त्रीकर्मप्रवृत्तिं वनपत्यायां दुहितृदोहित्रीपुत्रपौत्ररहितायां स्त्रियामतीतायां पुत्रायां वान्धवा मन्त्रादयो वक्ष्यमाणानां गृह्णन्ति ॥

*Vij. on Yāj., II, 144.*

2. *Vij. on Yāj., II, 145.*

3. सर्वेष्वपि विवहेषु प्रभुता पत्यवती च दुहितृणां तदनं भवति । अतश्च मातृकर्म मातरि वृथायां प्रथमं दुहितरी गृह्णन्ति तत्र पीडागुडासमवाये गुडा गृह्णन्ति । तदभावे परिणीता । तत्रापि प्रतिष्ठिताप्रतिष्ठितासमवायेऽप्रतिष्ठिता गृह्णन्ति । तदभावे प्रतिष्ठिता यथाह गौतमः (२८-४) । एतच्च तुल्यव्यतिरेकेण । तुल्यं तु सौकर्याणामिव

*Vij. on Yāj., II, 145.*

4. मातृकर्मणं पुत्रीवापाकरणाय न दुहितृभिः कृणावशिष्टं तु यत् न दुहितरी गृह्णी-  
कुरिति । युक्तं चेत् । दुहितृभ्यो विना दुहितृणां न भावे अन्यः पुत्रादिगृह्णीयात्

*Vij. on Yāj., II, 117.*

If by chance, a betrothed girl died before the marriage, who was to take her Strīdhana? The Mitākṣarā prescribed that the bridegroom would take back the presentations given by him, but he would have to pay the expenses incurred by both the parties. The ornaments for the head and other gifts made by her maternal grandfather and other relations and the property inherited by her, were to be given to her uterine brothers<sup>1</sup>.

For the convenience of giving the order of succession, Jīmūtavāhana ~~had~~ divided the Strīdhana into three classes — The Yautaka or the property given at the <sup>time of</sup> marriage, the property given by the father, and all other descriptions of the Strīdhana which may be called Ayautaka.

As regards the Yautaka Strīdhana, Jīmūtavāhana quoted the verse of Manu that the property which was given to the mother on her marriage, was to go to her unmarried daughters<sup>2</sup>. According to him, the order of succession to this category of the Strīdhana was thus — ~~first~~ of all unaffianced daughters succeeded, then in their default, the betrothed ones <sup>would</sup> succeed, and in their default the married ones were eligible to succeed<sup>3</sup>. He was of the opinion that in the text of Gautama<sup>4</sup> the right of

1. यदि वाग्दत्ता मृता तदा यत्पूर्वमंगुलीयादिकं द्रुतं वरुणं वरुणं तद्वर आददीत ।

उभयोरात्मनः कन्यादातुस्व यो व्यस्तं परितोष्य, विक्रमायुषावशिष्टमाददीत ।

यद्यु कन्यायै मातामहादिभिर्दत्तं शिरीषाणादिकं वा ज्ञानतं तत्सहीदरा

प्रातरी गृह्णीयुः ।

Vij. on Yāj., II, 146.

2. Manu, IX, 131.

3. Dāya., Ch. IV, Sec. II, 23.

4. Cited in the Dāya., Ch. IV, Sec. II, 13.

the female heir was indicated by the term <sup>meaning</sup> 'daughters' and the specific mention of the terms 'unaffiliated or apratta' and 'unmarried or apratiṣṭhita' suggested the order of succession<sup>1</sup>. Quoting the views of Yājñavalkya, Jīmūtavāhana propounded that whatever <sup>was</sup> given to a woman at the marriage performed in one of the first four forms, went to her daughters. The right was to be devolved first on the unmarried daughters, then on the betrothed ones, and in their default the married ones were nominated to inherit it. But in case of non-availability of all daughters, the son was chosen to take it<sup>2</sup>. The separate property of an issueless woman went to her husband<sup>3</sup>. If a woman was married according to Āsura and other remaining forms, her property first went to her mother and then to the father<sup>4</sup>.

As regards the property given to a woman after her marriage by the family of the father <sup>and</sup> mother, and of her husband, it was suggested that it should go to her brothers<sup>5</sup>. The author of the Dāyabhāga agreed with Viśvarūpa in this regard. Viśvarūpa remarked that the property of a childless woman married according to any form, was to go to her brothers<sup>6</sup>. After the discussion of the views of various lawgivers<sup>7</sup>, Jīmūtavāhana came to the

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1. Dāya., Ch. IV, Sec. II, 23.

2. Ibid, 25.

3. Ibid, Sec. III, 2-3.

4. Ibid, 6.

5. Ibid, 10.

6. Ibid, 13.

7. Ibid, 22-27.



conclusion that such property was to be devolved on the brothers, then to the mother, and then to the father, but on their failure the husband could take it<sup>1</sup>. The list of the heirs after the husband is very comprehensive and complicated, ~~and but it is needless to reproduce it here as it would require a sound knowledge of legal points.~~

In respect of the third and the last category of the Strī-dhana, Jīmūtavāhana was in favour of joint succession of sons and daughters. He quoted the views of Mamū<sup>2</sup>, Brhaspati<sup>3</sup>, Śaṅkha and Likhita and Devala in this regard. According to Śaṅkha and Likhita, all uterine brothers and unmarried daughters were entitled to the property of their mother<sup>4</sup>. Devala was of the view that after her death the property of a woman was common to both the sons and unmarried daughters, but if she was issueless, her husband and then her mother, brother or her father could take it<sup>5</sup>. The explanation as given by him seems to be quite justifying. He was of the opinion that if the maiden daughters were made the sole

1. Ibid, 28-9.

2. Supra, p. 273.

3. "A woman's property goes to her children; and the daughter is a sharer with them; provided she be unaffianced; but, if married, she shall not receive the maternal wealth".

Brhaspati, XXV, 87; Cited in Dāya, Ch. IV, Sec. II, 3.

4. Ibid, 4.

5. Ibid, 6.



heirs to the whole estate of their mother, then the injunction of Manu which gave them the exclusive right to inherit the yautaka Strīdhana of their mother would be useless<sup>1</sup>. It was further laid down that due to the above mentioned reason, the son and the unmarried daughter were made the joint heirs. In default of either of them, the other succeeded, and if both of them were not available, then the married daughter who had a son or who was likely to have one, was entitled to inherit it. But on failure of the daughters, the daughter's son could inherit the property and if there were the daughter's son as well as the son's son, the latter possessed the exclusive right over such property<sup>2</sup>. In default of all the above mentioned heirs, the barren and widowed daughters were considered eligible to inherit their mother's estate as they were also her offsprings<sup>3</sup>. It may be remarked that their mention as the last heirs was due to the fact that they could not offer oblation either personally or by means of their issues. Thus, ~~we may concur with Altekar that~~ the order of succession to the Strīdhana, as given by various law-givers, was very ambiguous and complicated <sup>4</sup> ~~one~~, and it varies <sup>d</sup> according to various schools. But it may also be mentioned that

1. Ibid, 7.

2. Ibid, 9-11.

3. Ibid, 12.

4. <sup>cf.</sup> A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch. VIII, p. 228.

the first preference was given to the daughters.

### Inheritance

#### Daughter's right to inherit

We have already noticed that the Stridhana of a woman was first to ~~be~~ devolved upon the daughters. The point to be discussed here relates to the crucial question whether the daughters had some right to inherit the patrimony.

#### Brotherless daughters

As regards the brotherless daughter, it may be said that she was recognised as heir even in the Vedic period<sup>1</sup>. She continued to enjoy this privilege down to the fifth century B.C., but it may be pointed out that by about 200 B.C. the general deterioration in the status of women had an adverse impact on their proprietary rights<sup>2</sup> and <sup>some</sup> the lawgivers did not mention <sup>the daughter</sup> her in the list of the heirs<sup>3</sup>. Later on we find a tendency of reverting to the old tradition as the lawgivers began to champion the cause of the daughter. It was argued that the daughter springs from the same limbs of the man as the son, so how unreasonable it is to confer the proprietary right on

1. Rgveda, II, 17.7.

2. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch. IX, p. 237.

3. Ibid.

others when she is alive<sup>1</sup>.

According to Yājñavalkya, the daughter should be listed in the list of the heirs after the son and the wife. Quoting the verse of Manu (IX, 130) Viśvarūpa (C. 750-850 A.D.) supported the view of the great lawgiver<sup>2</sup>. Viññāneśvara, as was expected of him, assigned the right to inherit the patrimony to the daughter in default of the son and the wife, and in support of his view he cited the views of Kātyāyana, Bṛhaspati and Gautama<sup>3</sup>.

From the explanation of the text of Yājñavalkya, as given by Devanabhaṭṭa, it may be construed that the married daughters were also eligible to inherit the property of their father<sup>4</sup>. It may be noted here that, according to the Dāyabhāga school also, the married daughters had a right to get the property of the father. The theory, as propounded by this school, is quite vague, but this much is clear that it gives the married

1. उतः पितरि मृते पुत्रिकाया अनुत्पन्नपुत्राया कर्हरत्नप्राप्तं विधीयते धर्मादेन ।

तस्यामात्मनि पुत्रनिमित्तं तिष्ठन्त्यानिव कर्त्तुं न पुत्रोत्पत्तिस्तदीयाय युज्यते ।

अथवा तस्यामात्मभूतायां पितृहपायामिति पुत्र्या दुहिता समेति ।

Medh. on Manu, IX, 130.

आत्मस्थानीयः पुत्र आत्मा वै पुत्रानामासीति मन्त्रलिङ्गादत्तमा च दुहिता तस्या

अप्यगम्यः उत्पादनात् । अतस्तस्यां पुत्रिकायां पितुरात्मस्वरूपायां विष्माना-

यामपुत्रस्य मृतस्य पितुर्न पुत्रिकाव्यतिरिक्तः कस्यन्यां हरेत् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 130.

2. Viśva. on Yāj, II, 139.

3. तदभावे दुहितरः । दुहितर इति कुवर्त्तुं समानजातीयानामसमानजातीयानां च

समविधानां प्राप्तिरर्थम् । तथा च कात्यायनः । 'पत्नी मर्तुर्नहरी या स्या-

व्यभिचारिणी तदभावे तु दुहिता याचनृठा भवेत्तेति' ।

Vij. on Yāj., II, 136.

4. S.C.V., p.

daughter a right to inherit her father's property<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, we see that the brotherless daughter's right was recognised in the period under survey and the society ~~could not~~ <sup>may have</sup> ~~follow~~ <sup>ed to some extent</sup> the injunctions of the lawgivers. That the daughters actually inherited father's property, is evident from some of the epigraphs of the period. An inscription (12th Cen. A.D.), found in Kolhapur, records the sale of a piece of land by a woman. The land seems to have been inherited by her from her father<sup>2</sup>.

#### Daughters who had brothers

An analysis of the injunctions of Manu shows that he did not concede any right to inherit the property of the father to such a daughter who had brothers. It was ordained by him that each brother should give one fourth part of his share to each sister and those who refuse to do so, become out-caste<sup>3</sup>. The word 'dadyuh' in the original verse of Manu, should be taken to mean that the daughter had no right to inherit the paternal property. Medhātithi clearly gives the significance of the term: "A man is spoken of as taking a thing only when he is its owner and no one speaks of such things as to be given to him; hence it is that no one speaks of the brothers giving to a brother, both being owners; and whenever the word 'giving' is used it is only when the recipient is not the owner of the property concerned<sup>4</sup>.

1. Dāya., Ch. XI, Sec. II, 1-3.

2. श्रीमद्भारतस्य मुद्रितः सकाराद् गृहीत्वा पूर्वकिं प्राप्तोऽप्योदत्तान् ।

E.I., Vol. III, p. 215.

3. Manu, IX, 118.

4. Medh. on Manu, IX, 118.

R.M. Das, Women In Manu And His Seven Commentators, Ch. IV, pp. 78-9.

It seems that this 'giving' was a moral binding upon the brothers rather than a legal one, as the dictum says that 'those brothers who do not give it become outcaste'. The one-fourth part was to be given to the unmarried sisters only, as it was meant for their marriage expenses and not as a share in father's property. By this arrangement Manu did justice to the unprovided sister whose situation could well be imagined after the death of her father. Medhātithi was of the view that the express allotment of the one-fourth share was made to indicate the quantity of the wealth that was to be spent in a sister's marriage, as the brothers might not know what was to be given on such occasions<sup>1</sup>. It might be that the brothers could not care as much as was necessary and as a result of the lack of resources, she might not get a suitable husband and might be put to misery throughout her life. Kullūka (C. 1150-1300 A.D.) also clearly pointed out that the one-fourth part must be spent by the brother for the marriage of his sister and suggested that each brother should give this share to his uterine sister<sup>2</sup>. —

1. तत्र न ग्यायते क्विद् दातव्यं क्षमिष्यश्च परिमाणायैवेदमुक्तं स्वादंशात्  
स्तुभगिनिमिति ।

Medh. on Manu, IX, 118.

2. ब्राह्मणादाश्रित्यैवैश्वर्याश्रित्वारो प्रातरः स्वजात्यपेक्षया स्वैव्यश्चतुरांशान्  
होयुः । विप्रत्यादिना वक्ष्यमाणोऽप्यो भगिण्य जात्नीयात्पीयाडुभागाश्च-  
तुर्थभागं पुष्कं कन्याभ्योऽनुठाभ्योभगिनीभ्यो या यस्य सौख्यां भगिनी स तस्या  
एव संस्कारार्थमिति सर्वं दद्युः । ----- यदि भगिनी संस्कारार्थं क्षमार्गं दातुं  
नेच्छति तदा पतिताः पश्युः ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 118.

— As regards the sister who had no uterine brother, the lawgiver generously laid down that the half-brothers should do it<sup>1</sup>.

Commenting on a verse of Yājñavalkya, Viśvarūpa remarked that the brothers should perform the marriage ceremony of their sister and for that purpose if there was no money only then they should give one-fourth part of their share<sup>2</sup>. From his gloss it would appear that the commentator was not in favour of giving the fourth part as a rule, for it was to be given in the event of non-availability of any wealth for the purpose of marriage. It tended to curtail the right of the daughter. But Vijñānesvara, who wrote his commentary in the eleventh century, i.e. two centuries later than Viśvarūpa, strongly recommended the share of a daughter in the property of her father<sup>3</sup>. As regards the one-fourth share he opined that the brother of the same caste should give a share equal to his one-fourth share to his uterine sister. For instance he ordained that if a certain

1. स्तेनैकजातीयैर्मात्र्यमग्निनीसदृभावेऽपि सौर्व्यमग्निनी प्यश्चतुर्थभागदानमवगन्तव्यम् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 118.

2. संस्कारः परिणयनम् । तत् पूर्वसंस्कृतेरसंस्कृतानां प्रादुर्णार्थं कार्यम् । तादर्थ्येन वा द्रव्यमपनीयावशिष्टं विभजनीयम् । अस्मादेव च ज्ञायते साधारणाद्रव्याद् विवाह-निवृत्तिः । ----- यदि त्वत्सवं द्रव्यं वा न स्यात्, ततो निवार्यज्ञाच्चतुर्थमंशं मगिन्यर्थमपनीयान्यत् समविभजनीयम् ।

Viśva. on Yāj., II, 128.

3. तस्मात्तुष्टुहर्षं कन्याऽप्यंशमग्निनी ।

Vij. on Yāj., II, 124.



person had one wife, a son and a daughter, then after his death the whole paternal property should be divided into two, and one part should be further divided into four, then the quarter share should be given to the girl and the rest became the share of her brother<sup>1</sup>. Thus, it was not directed that the quarter part was to be deducted out of the brother's own share; but it was to be given out of the patrimony. It is thus evident, that Vijnānesvara was in favour of assigning a share to <sup>sucha</sup> the daughter in her father's property.

It is clear from the words of Devala that the emphasis was not so much laid on assigning a share to the daughter as on providing sufficient provision for her marriage<sup>2</sup>.

It is said in the Smṛticandrikā that if the family property was quite extensive and the one fourth share allotted to the daughter was so much as some of it remained unspent after the performance of the marriage, then the daughter could not take it to her new home. Thus, according to Devanabhatta, the sister

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1. यज्जातोया कन्या तज्जातीयपुत्रभागाञ्चतुर्थांशभागिनी सा कर्तव्या । एवमुक्तं भवति । यदि ब्राह्मणी सा कन्या तदा ब्राह्मणीपुत्रस्य यावानंशी भवति तस्य चतुर्थांशस्तस्या भवति । तथैव । यदि कस्यचिदब्राह्मण्येव एका पत्नी, पुत्ररक्षिता, कन्या चेत्ता तत्र पित्र्यं तथैव द्रव्यं दत्त्वा विपण्य तर्हि मातुं चतुर्थां विपण्य, तुरीयमंशं कन्यायै दत्त्वा शेषं पुत्रं गृह्णीयात् ।

Vij. on Yaj., II, 124.

2. कन्याम्यस्य पितुर्द्रव्यं दत्तं वैवाहिकं कृत्वा ।

Devala quoted in S.C.V., p. 625.



could not be allowed to inherit like brothers and what was allotted to her could not be considered as her share of the family property<sup>1</sup>.

Two of the model documents in the Lekhapaddhati also reveal that the successors had to give an equal amount for the marriage of their unmarried sister<sup>2</sup>.

Thus, it may be inferred that the main anxiety of the lawgivers was to make provision for the marriage of the unmarried daughters and for this purpose the allotment of one-fourth share of the brother was propounded by them. In this context it would not be improper to add that the marriage was considered obligatory for the girls and if by ill luck their parents could not get it performed in their life-time, then this sacred duty was to be performed by the brothers of the girl and hence the provision.

According to Dr. Altekar, ~~a contradiction may be seen in the views of Sukracarya who was the only author who assigned~~ only <sup>3</sup> a small share to the daughter in the property of the father even

1. ऋता इति विशेषोपादानाच्च विवाहार्थं पुत्रमागानुसारिमाणहरणं न पुनर्प्रातुणांमिव दुहितुणां दायविभागार्थमिति गम्यते ।

S.C.V., p. 625.

2. L.P., Vibhāṅgapatravidhi, p. 48.

if she had brothers<sup>1</sup>, while all other lawgivers merely ~~speak~~<sup>spoke</sup> of the one-fourth share of the brothers to be spent over her marriage. But as far as Viṇṇānesvara is concerned, this statement appears to be incorrect. It has already been noticed that he assigned a share to the daughter in her father's property<sup>2</sup>.

#### Widow's right to inherit

Whether widows had a right to inherit the property of their husbands, is a crucial and controversial issue. Right from the Vedic age we find contrary views on this point. On the basis of some Vedic texts Dr. Altekar and R.M. Das infer that this right was not given to them<sup>3</sup>, whereas Indra says that they

1. According to Dr. Altekar, Śukranīti is as late as about

1300 A.D. and it may be possible that this assignment of a share equal to half of the son, is due to the influence of the Muslim Law.

~~Cf. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch. IX, p. 241.~~

(But it is to be noted that various scholars assign different periods to Śukranīti. Dr. V.S. Agrawal puts it in the Gupta period (Harṣacarita Ek Sāṅskṛtika Adhyayana, p. 219).

Dr. U.N. Ghoshal concurs with Dr. Altekar (A History of Indian Political Ideas, p. 495). But now ample evidence has been adduced by Dr. L. Gopal to show that it is a spurious

text of the nineteenth century. (Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, vol. XXV, 1962, pp. 524 ff.)

2. Supra, p. 283.

3. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch. IX, p. 250;

R.M. Das, Women in Manu and His Seven Commentators, Ch. VII, p. 234.

enjoyed the right fully<sup>1</sup>. Even the lawgivers were not <sup>unanimous</sup> ~~clear~~ on this point. Some of the verses of Kātyāyana and Bṛhaspati, as quoted by the authorities like Viṣṇāneśvara and Devanabhaṭṭa, speak against the widow's right to inherit her husband's property, while others justify her right to inherit in this regard.

It may be pointed out that most of the Dharmasāstra writers were against the right of inheritance for the widow in the property of her deceased husband. They assigned only a maintenance to her. Kautilya also concurred with them. Manu too no where hinted at this right of the widow. Medhātithi (~~C. 825-900 A.D.~~), the illustrious commentator of Manu, was also not in favour of granting this right to the widow<sup>2</sup>. But it may be added that his attitude was not liked by others<sup>3</sup>. It seems that Kullūka (C. 1150-1300 A.D.) was inclined to give the right to the widow to inherit her husband's property in default of the son<sup>4</sup>. He argued that the rule providing maintenance to the widows, was for the concubines and unchaste widows only<sup>5</sup>.

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1. Prof. Indra, "The Status of Women in Ancient India,"

Ch. XI, p. 169.

2. अती यन्मेधातिथिना पत्नीनार्यश्रमागित्वं निजिदमुक्तं तत्संबन्धम् ।

3. मेधातिथिर्निराकुर्वन् प्रीणाति सतां मनः ।

Quoted by Kullūka on Manu, IX, 187.

4. अविद्यमानमुख्यपुत्रस्य पत्नीदुहितुरस्तिस्य च पिता कं गृहणीयात् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 185.

5. संवर्धनमाश्रयन् तत्पत्नीलाभार्थिकस्यैव न स्य पत्नी विधायम् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 187.

— It may be argued that no word in the verse of Manu (IX, 185) indicates the meaning 'patnīduhitṛahitasya', as suggested by Kullūka. So we can justifiably say that the commentator himself was of the opinion that the widow should get the right to inherit the property of her husband and that is why he inserted the words to express his own views.

We find that the champions of the women's cause were not satisfied with this state of uncertainty and in order to give a definite shape to it, took the lead to advocate widow's right to the husband's estate and amongst them Vijñāneśvara's name may be mentioned first. He condemned the opinion of Dhareśvara, according to whom the right of inheritance could be given to a widow only if she was willing to resort to Niyoga and propounded that if a sonless widow remained chaste, she took the whole of the estate of her husband<sup>1</sup>. It is worthwhile to note that chastity was considered an essential quality in this regard<sup>2</sup>. Vijñāneśvara also quoted the views of Sāṃkhya according to which wife could be the heir<sup>3</sup>.

It appears that these later writers reflect the change in the society of their age in this respect. Some of them appear

1. तस्मादपुत्रस्य स्वर्ग्यतिस्य विमर्शस्यासंशुष्टिनः परिणीता स्त्री संयता सकलमेव धनं गृह्णातीति स्थितम् ।

Vij. on Yāj., II, 135.

2. Ibid.

3. "स्वर्ग्यतिस्य ह्यपुत्रस्य प्राप्तुणामिदं तदभावे पितरौ हरेयातां ज्येष्ठा वा पत्नीति ।"

Ibid.

to have been influenced by the views of Br̥haspati who declared that the wife is half the body of her husband and shares his good and bad deeds and so after the death of her husband, his half body remains alive in the form of his wife. As such, it is unreasonable for any body else to take his property when half of his own body is not dead<sup>1</sup>. A careful study of the views of Viṣṇuśvara reveals that after Yājñavalkya he allowed the widow to inherit her husband's property only when her husband had separated from the joint family<sup>2</sup>. It has been pointed out that he could have utilised the theory of Br̥haspati and allowed the wife to succeed to her husband's property, whether the family was united or not. But he did not think it proper to do so, as it might evoke a number of strifes and grievances amongst the members of the joint family<sup>3</sup>.

Jīmūtavāhana, with his powerful and ~~just~~ arguments, justified the widow's right in her husband's property. He declared that no authority opined that the ownership which a wife obtained in her husband's property at the time of her

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1. आम्नाये स्मृतित्वे व लोकावारे व पुरिषिः ।

शरीरार्थं स्मृता जाया पुण्यापुण्यफले समः ॥

यस्य नोपरता मायां देहार्थं तस्य जीवति ।

जीवत्यर्थं शरीरे तु कथमन्यः स्वमाप्नुयात् ॥

सकुल्यैर्विष्मन्तैस्तु पितृमातृसन्तानिभिः ।

अपुत्रस्य प्रीतस्य पत्नी तदुपागहारिणी ॥

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 187; Viṣ. on Yāj., II, 135.

2. Viṣ. on Yāj., II, 135.

3. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch.—IX, pp. 260-1.

marriage ended with his death. Then it could not be said that the wife forfeited her right as soon as she became widow. Further it could not be suggested that she could take as much as was necessary for her bare maintenance. He quoted the views of Viṣṇu, according to whom a sonless person's property should go to the widow and then to daughter, ~~and~~ parents etc. Here the 'property' might be taken to mean the whole estate that should devolve upon the daughter, brother and parents. Then how unjust it was to speak of the restricted meaning of the property in the case of the widow alone<sup>1</sup>.

Jīmūtavāhana's generosity may be perceived in his views which suggest<sup>1</sup> that the wife of a man who belonged to the joint family, was also eligible to get her husband's share. It seems that he took the incentive from the text of Bṛhaspati according to which the brother could take the property of a man only when he had no wife or son, but it did not mention whether the family was joint or separated. Thus, to him it did not make any difference whether the family was joint or separated. In this way, we see that Jīmūtavāhana went a step further ~~than~~ <sup>than</sup> Viṣṇu who denied the right to the widow of a man belonging to the joint family.

It cannot be inferred from the liberal ideas of Jīmūtavāhana that he gave an absolute right to the widow in the property of her husband. He was of the view that the widow should be a limited heir and should only inherit a life-estate, the income of which she could use in any way she liked, but she could not

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1. Daya., Ch. XI, Sec. I, 5-6.



make a gift, sale or mortgage of it<sup>1</sup>. Here, it is worthwhile to note that the relaxation in the rule was in the case of legal necessity only. The author of the *Dāyabhāga* put the expenditure incurred for the benefit of the late husband under the category of 'legal necessity'<sup>2</sup>. One specific point to be mentioned here is that the unnecessary and wasteful expenditure on this account was not considered justifiable.

It is interesting to point out that *Vijñāneśvara* was silent on the point of widow's power of alienation<sup>3</sup>. From the above account it may be inferred that down to the twelfth century the widow could enjoy only a limited power over her estate. It was *Devanabhatṭa* (C. 1200-1225 A.D.), who, relying on the text of *Bṛhaspati*, declared that his denial to the sale or mortgage of the immovable property, only indicated that the gifts should not be made over to the persons of questionable conduct like singers, dancers and actors<sup>4</sup>. In this way, he relaxed the law to some extent.

That the widow was a limited heir, is also proved by the testimony of inscriptions which indicate that the permission of the reversioners was also taken in the transaction of any deal. A south Indian inscription says that a gift of land was made by

1. *Dāya.*, Ch. XI, Sec. 1, 56.

2. *Ibid*, 61.

3. *Vij.* on *Yāj.*, II, 136.

4. तद्वितरदृष्टार्थकर्तृकादीनां दानादावस्थातन्मृग्यप्रतिपादनार्थमिति मन्तव्यम् ।



the widow with the sanction of her brother-in-law, who was the next reversioner<sup>1</sup>. Another inscription of the twelfth century suggests that <sup>sometimes</sup> ~~perhaps~~ the permission of the whole caste was also essential for the transaction. A widow here is described as <sup>making</sup> ~~indulging~~ in a transaction with her brother-in-law and Śrīvaiṣṇavas<sup>2</sup>. As the donation was made to the temple, it may be said that the widow had to take the consent of the reversioner in effecting any donation from her estate even for the religious purpose.

<sup>However,</sup> It ~~would~~ appear<sup>↑</sup> that the widow's right of inheritance was not recognised in actual practice in Gujarat <sup>and in adjoining regions</sup> till the twelfth century, as the kings wished their rich men to die issueless so that they might acquire their property<sup>3</sup>. King Kumārāpāla (C. 1143-72 A.D.) is said to have forfeitted his right in favour of a sorrowful widow<sup>4</sup>.

#### Mother's right

Almost all the lawgivers were in favour of granting the right of inheritance to the mother<sup>5</sup>. According to Kullūka, when

1. E.C., Vol. IX, No. 33.

2. Ibid, Vol. X, No. 100 A.

3. निष्पुत्रं प्रियमाणमात्यमवनीपालो ह्यह ! वांछति ।

Moha., Act. III, p. 66.

4. न मुक्तं यत्पूर्वं सधु-नहुष-नामान्-मरत-प्रभृत्युच्चोनायः कृत्युगकृतोत्पत्तिभिरपि ।  
किमुक्तं संतोणाद्यापि रुदतीविश्वकुना कुमारमापाठ । स्वमसि महतां मस्तकमणिः

Kumārāpalapratibodha, p. 115.

5. Manu, IX, 217; Yāj., II, 135; Brhaspati, 63; Śukra, 593-4;

S.C.V., p. 690.

a person had no widow or daughter; his parents were entitled to inherit the property<sup>1</sup>. Viśvarūpa, and Vijñāneśvara, the famous commentators of Yājñavalkya, gave preference to the mother in this regard. They based their contention on ~~the~~ grammatical ground<sup>2</sup>. Another reason for the preference of the mother was the fact that she has close and direct relation with her son, so she should get his property<sup>3</sup>.

But unlike Vijñāneśvara, Jīmūtavāhana gave preference to the father. If the father was not alive, only then the mother was entitled to get her son's property<sup>4</sup>.

#### Grandmother's right

The grandmother's right was also recognised since early times. Manu was of the view that in the absence of the mother, the grandmother took the property of her grandson, if he did not

#### 1. मातापितरौ विषम्य गृह्णीयाताम् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 217.

#### 2. माता च पिता च पितरौ । सहाधिकारादु दम्भकरणमिहैकप्राप्त्यर्थम् ।

दम्भनिर्देशोऽपि नातुरिव प्राथम्यम् ।

Viśva. on Yāj., II, 139.

पितरामिति वातुशब्दस्य पूर्व वक्तव्यात् पाठश्चादिवाच्यश्चाकामादनं संबन्धेऽपि  
श्चापिदायां प्रतीकानुरोधेनैव प्रथमं माता कथमाह तदभावे पितरिति नम्यते ।

Vij. on Yāj., II, 135.

#### 3. किं च पिता पुत्रान्तरेष्वपि साधारणी, माता तु न साधारणीति प्रख्यातत्वं तिस्रया 'दन्तरः सपिण्डाद्यस्तस्य तस्य धर्मं भवेदिति' वक्तव्यान्नातुरिव प्रथमं अग्रणीयुक्तम् ।

Ibid.

#### 4. Dāya., Ch. XI, Sec. IV, 1-2.

have wife, father, brother and brother's sons. Kullūka also concurred with Manu in this regard<sup>1</sup>. Devanabhatta placed her before the brothers. But, in practice she <sup>does not appear to have enjoyed</sup> ~~was not enjoying~~ this right as the people considered her as a distant heir. It is said that Manu who gave the right of inheritance to the grandmother, had only cited the names of the heirs and did not give their list in order. But Yājñavalkya and Viṣṇu gave the list of heirs who could inherit the property in case of the non-availability of the preceding heir<sup>2</sup> and they did not mention the name of the grandmother in the list.

### Partition

#### Wife's share

Generally the wife could not claim any right to partition. But it would appear that Viśvarūpa and Viṣṇaśvara were of the view that if a father did the partition in his life-time, then his wife could get a share equal to that of her son<sup>3</sup>. Viṣṇaśvara however, propounded that the wife could get the family property only with the consent of her husband<sup>4</sup>. Thus the wife's share

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1. मातरि मृतायां पत्नीः पितृप्रातृप्रातृप्रातृप्रातृ पितृमता कं गृह्णीयात् ।

Kullūka on Manu, IX, 217.

2. Kane, Dharmasāstra Kā Itihāsa, Part II, p. 915.

3. Viśva. on Yāj., II, 119;

Vij. on Yāj., II, 115.

4. तस्मात्पुत्रैरिच्छया मायायां नपि पुत्रविनाशो पत्नयेव न स्वेच्छया ।

Vij. on Yāj., II, 52.

depended on the sweet will of the husband. The same was the view of the *Sukranītisāra*<sup>1</sup>. A model document in the *Lekhapaddhati* suggests that the wife could get a share equal to that of her son even if the partition was made after the death of her husband<sup>2</sup>.

#### Mother's share

In formulating rules and regulations regarding the mother, the lawgivers, it seems, had her greatness uppermost in their minds. Manu ordained that the sons should not indulge in partition in her life-time as it might hurt her feelings<sup>3</sup>. As regards her share in the partition, there was difference of opinion among the lawgivers. Yājñavalkya, Viṣṇu and Nārada were of the opinion that after the death of the father, the mother could get a full share equal to that of her son<sup>4</sup>. Viṣṇuśvara was also of the same view, but he remarked that if the mother was in possession of *Strīdhana*, her share could only be half of the son's share<sup>5</sup>.

1. Ch. IV, Sec. V, 588.

2. L.P., p. 48.

3. Manu, IX, 104.

4. Yāj., II, 123; Viṣṇu, 18, 34; Nārada quoted in Dāya., Ch. XII.

5. माताऽपि स्वपुत्रांश्च जं हरेत् । यदि स्त्रीधनं न दत्तम् । इति स्वयंस्मृत्येति वक्ष्यते ।

Vij. on Yāj., II, 123.

However, it

~~It~~ is said in the Smṛticandrikā that the mother was not entitled to get a share in partition<sup>1</sup>. This view was based on the opinion of Baudhāyana, according to whom women were considered ineligible to get a share in partition<sup>2</sup>.

A study of the proprietary rights of women reveals to us that the society recognized their right to Strīdhana, the scope of which was fairly enlarged ~~down to~~ <sup>by</sup> the twelfth century when all varieties of property were included in it <sup>almost</sup> all over India except Bengal<sup>3</sup>. The views of Viṣṇāneśvara and Jīmūtavāhana are important in this regard<sup>4</sup>. Even the husband could not lay hand over his wife's exclusive property without any extreme necessity. Thus, the development of the scope of Strīdhana may be taken to herald a rise in the status of women.

As regards their right of inheritance in the family property, we may say that they were certainly not the losers. The right of the daughter, the wife, the widow, the mother and even the grandmother to inherit the family property began to be recognised more and more in varying degrees. The mother's and wife's right of share on partition, also shows signs of greater recognition.

1. S.C.V., p. 268.

2. Ibid.

3. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation, Ch. IX, p. 275.

4. Supra, pp. 263-7

## Chapter VIII

### Dress And Decoration

## Chapter VIII

### Dress And Decoration

Dress and ornaments possess an irresistible charm for women. The literary and epigraphic sources containing references to them and a vivid illustration is found in the sculpture of the period.

#### Dress

The Uttariya appears to be a popular female garment of our period.<sup>1</sup> It was a piece of cloth which covered the upper part of the body and may be taken to mean the dupatta of these days. It was also called dukūla.<sup>2</sup> In some of the Sanskrit works we find other terms for the upper garment of the females - śūsuka<sup>3</sup>, stanāśūsuka<sup>4</sup> and udarāśūsuka<sup>5</sup>. Whether the śūsuka and the uttariya were synonyms or not, can not be ascertained with certainty. Generally the term śūsuka was simply used for 'garment' as is evident from the Amarakoṣa<sup>6</sup>. But wherever it is

1. H.C., Ch. IV, p. 194; Priya, Act II, p. 34; Naga, Act III, p. 64; Amarusataka, V. 113; M.C., Act V, p. 183; D.C., later part, Uch. II, p. 291; Pavanadūtā, V. 35; Mānasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, V. 1187; Naisadha, canto XXI, V. 15.

2. Kādambarī, p. 248; D.C., later part, Uch. II, p. 291; Viddha, Act II, V. 18; Naisadha, canto XV, V. 21; G.O., canto XII, V. 3.

3. Ratnā, Act IV, V. 17; Kādambarī, p. 31; Śisūpālavadha, canto VII, V. 32; Naisadha, canto X, V. 100.

4. Kādambarī, p. 122; M.N., Act III, V. I; Naisadha, canto XV, V. 74.

5. D.K., Vol. I, V.

6. A.K., Manuśyavarga, V. 115.



used as one of the components of the female dress covering the upper part of the body and is called stanaśuka, it may also be taken to denote the upper garment<sup>1</sup>. The *Mālatīmādhavam* reveals that perhaps in the case of the maidens the stanaśuka was the only cloth for covering the breasts<sup>2</sup>. Possibly the śuka was more popularly known by the name of uttariya<sup>3</sup>.

The Uttariya was popular among the Rajput ladies also who called it cunari<sup>4</sup>. Some of the scenes carved in the Khajurāho temples depict women as wearing cunari<sup>5</sup>.

The uttariya or śuka may also have been used as a veil. In the *Nāgānanda* of Harṣa, the *vidūṣaka* says that he would dress himself as a woman and cover his face with the uttariya<sup>6</sup>. It may be inferred that generally women used to wear their upper garment in such a way that it might also cover the head and serve the purpose of a veil. The use of veil among the ladies is also testified by Bāṇa. He tells us that half of the face of *Malatī* was covered with a net and her head was wrapped in a red garment<sup>7</sup>. While describing the ladies of Thanjavara, he says

1. G.S. Ghurye, *Indian Costume*, Appendix XIV, p. 259.

2. M.M., Act III, v. 1.

3. G.S. Ghurye, *Indian Costume*, Appendix XIV, p. 259.

4. V.R., canto II, v. 64.

5. The yawning pose of a woman in the Kanjaria temple and a woman playing flute in the Viśvanātha temple are wearing cunari; U. Agarwal, *Khajurāho Sculptures And Their Significance*, Ch. VI, p. 131; *The Art of The Chandellas*, Ed. A. Goswami, plate 35.

6. *Nāga*, Act III, p. 64.

7. H.C., Uch III, p. 145.

that their faces were covered with jālikā<sup>1</sup>. When Rājyaśrī was clad in the wedding dress, she was wearing a red coloured veil<sup>2</sup>. The Kādambarī describes <sup>a</sup>Matanga maiden as wearing red veil<sup>3</sup>. It also tells us that Patralekhā, the maid of Prince Candrapīḍa was wearing a veil<sup>4</sup>. While going out of her house, Kādambarī put a red garment over her head so that she might not be seen by others<sup>5</sup>. The Śisūpālavadha relates how the faces of the royal ladies became visible to the people when their veils were removed from there<sup>6</sup>. The Mahāvīracarita suggests that the married ladies of aristocratic families used to put on veil in the presence of elderly people<sup>7</sup>. Likewise a Prakrit work of the eleventh century also refers to the use of a śirovastra by the ladies of the rich and cultured families. It was called nirāṅgi<sup>8</sup>.

The evidence of the literature and the art prove the prevalence of the colī, also called kañcuka, kūrpāsaka or kurtaka. It was used to cover the breast. The kañcuka was of two types - one was a short one covering only the upper part of the body, and the other was long enough to cover upto the

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1. H.C., Uch. I, pp. 48-9.

2. Ibid., Uch. IV, p. 216.

3. Kādambarī, p. 21.

4. Ibid., p. 192.

5. Ibid., p. 302.

6. Śisūpālavadha, v. 17.

7. M.C., Act II, p. 84.

8. A.N.K., Ch. III, v. 106; Cf. Infra, Ch. V, pp. \_\_\_\_

toes. In the Harṣacarita Mālatī is described as wearing a long kañcuka coming upto her toes.<sup>1</sup> The Kādambarī also refers to this type of kañcuka.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes women used decorated kañcuka which was bedecked with pearls and stars<sup>3</sup>.

The Daśakumāracarita of Daṇḍin (8th cen. A.D.) and the Viṇḍhasālabbhañjika of Rājasekhara (10th cen. A.D.) tell us that the maidens used to wear blue colī or colaka.<sup>4</sup> It ~~is~~ *has been* called kañculika in the karpūramañjarī<sup>5</sup>. That the colī and the kañculika are synonyms, is evident from the Tīkā Sarvasva on the Amarakosa<sup>6</sup> (c. 1159 A.D.). A reference to a colaka also occurs in the Naisadhiyacaritam<sup>7</sup> (12th cen. A.D.). Another type of colī was called kūrpāsaka.<sup>8</sup> Its sleeves reached up to the kūrpāsa i.e. elbows and due to this fact it was called kūrpāsaka.<sup>9</sup> The Śiśupālavadhā tells us that the royal ladies used to wear kūrpāsaka.<sup>10</sup> From the Mānasollāsa we know that the Gurjaraladies used to wear kañcuka which covered the arms.<sup>11</sup> Kalhana's chronicles

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1. H.C., Ch. I, p. 47.

2. Kādambarī, p. 21.

3. H.C., Ch. IV, p. 212.

4. D.C., later part, Uch. V, p. 299;

Viḍḍha, Act I, v. 34.

5. Karp., Act I, v. 24.

6. On A.K., Manuṣyavarga, v. 119.

7. Naisadha, canto XV, v. 74.

8. A.K., Manuṣyavarga, v. 118.

9. V.S. Agarwal, Harṣacarita- Ek Saṁskṛtika Adhyāyana, p. 152.

10. Śiśupālavadhā, canto V, v. 23.

11. Mānasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, v. 1187.

of Kashmir also refers to ladies' kañcuks the sleeves of which covered the half arms<sup>1</sup>.

The Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang also mentions a female dress which covered the shoulders and was long and loose at the bottom<sup>2</sup>. Perhaps he was referring to kūrpāsaka. Alberuni (11th cen. A.D.) mentions a female robe known as the kurtaka. It was a sleeved shirt coming up to the middle of the body<sup>3</sup>.

It is a fact that in most of the cases the female icons are shown with uncovered breasts but the occasional representation of the coli or stanapatta proves the use of coli among the cultured ladies. Some of the Khajuraho sculptures are worth noticing in this regard<sup>4</sup>. The sculptures of Bengal also depict female as wearing coli or stanapatta<sup>5</sup>. The representation of kañcuki or coli is also found in the Pāla sculptures of Bihar. In the marriage scene of Śiva and Pārvatī, the goddess is depicted as wearing kañcuki. The Buddhist goddess Tārā is shown as wearing kañcuki which covers the upper part of her breast only<sup>6</sup>.

1. Raj., VII, 930.

2. Watters, Vol. I, Ch. V, p. 148.

3. Sachau, Vol. I, p. 180.

4. /Plate I, Fig. 5, Plate IV, Fig. 17; Left outside Kandaria temple, right outside Lakṣmana temple, left outside Viśvanātha temple;

U. Agarwal, Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance, Ch.VI, p. 130.

5. R.C. Majumdar, History of Bengal, Vol.I, Plate XXVI, p.614.

6. V.P. Singh, Bhāratīya Kālā Ko Bihar Ki Den, Ch.VII, Figs.97-98.

The canīataka or an under garment was also worn by women. The Harṣacarita reveals that Mālatī was wearing a coloured and spotted canīataka<sup>1</sup>.

The sārī has always been a favourite and charming dress of the Indian women, and there have been different styles of wearing it according to the ways and customs of the different regions. This holds good for the ancient as well as later period. Rajasekhara (10th cen A.D.) tells us that the ladies of Bengal used to wear sārī in such a style that the upper part of it was taken over the head and covered it<sup>2</sup>. The same style is still in fashion among the Bengali ladies. In the Pāncāla country the sārī was worn from hips downwards and reached up to the ankles<sup>3</sup>. The sārī of the Kerala ladies appears to have been a long cloth which, after being wrapped round the body, was tied up under the armpit<sup>4</sup>. The use of sārī was also in vogue in Kashmir<sup>5</sup> and Rajasthan<sup>6</sup> also.

The sculptures of our period also testify to the use of sārī by the ladies. It is said that in Bengal during the Pala period the style of wearing sārī was changed and it became long enough to cover the ankles, while in the earlier period, as is evident from the Paharpur sculptures, it was worn in a different

1. H.C., Uch. I, p. 48.

2. Kavyamīmāṃsā, Ch. III, p. 21.

3. Ibid., p. 22.

4. Ibid.

5. S.C. Ray, Early History And Culture of Kashmir, Ch. IX, p. 209.

6. R.B. Singh, History of the Chahamanas, Ch. XII, p. 306.

manner<sup>1</sup>. The figures of goddess Gaṅgā (Sen period - 12th cen. A.D.) shows the same style of wearing sārī as is found in the Pāla sculptures<sup>2</sup>. The marriage scene of Śiva and Pārvatī (the sculptures of the Pāla period, Bihar) depicts Pārvatī as wearing close fitting sārī up to the ankles<sup>3</sup>.

Various modes of wearing sārī are illustrated in the Khajuraho sculptures. A woman in the Lakṣmaṇa temple is depicted as holding the upper belt of the sārī in order to pull it on<sup>4</sup>. Another woman is shown in the act of putting on the sārī. She is holding two ends of the belt in her hands<sup>5</sup>. In one of the scenes of the Viśvanātha temple a woman is seen as holding the left end of her sārī in her hand<sup>6</sup>. It may be noticed that the sārī in all these scenes is depicted as a tight-fitting garment. It is only through the curves and edges which are so nicely and clearly carved that one can notice the existence of the sārī, otherwise the figures appear to be naked.

The South Indian sculptures also prove the popularity of sārī. A Cōla queen (10th cen. A.D.) is shown in a sārī which is just above the ankles<sup>7</sup>. A pillar bracket figure of the time of the Western Chālukyas (11-12th centuries) also depicts the

1. R.C. Majumdar, History of Bengal, Vol. I, Ch. XV, p. 613.

2. C. Sivaramamurti, Indian Sculpture, Plate 43.

3. V.P. Singh, Bharatiya Kala Ko Bihar Ki Den, Fig. 98.

4. Inner Pradakṣiṇā, Lakṣmaṇa temple.

5. Right outside Lakṣmaṇa temple.

6. Right front, Viśvanātha temple;

U. Agarwal, Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance,  
Ch. VI, pp. 129-30.

7. Giuseppe Tucci, Indian Sculptures in Bronze and Stones, Table II.



same fashion of wearing sāri<sup>1</sup>. From this brief account it may be inferred that generally the dress of a woman was composed of the above mentioned garments, but the sāri alone seems to be an essential part of it. Here it is worthwhile to say something about nivī or nivī which was the knot of the lower garment of women<sup>2</sup>. This garment was worn from the waist and the knot was fastened up in the centre. The Sanskrit works of our period often refer to it. The *Kādambarī* refers to the nivī of the lower garment worn by *Kādambarī*<sup>3</sup>. The *Sisupalavedha* of *Magha* also refers to the use of the lower garment of women which had nivī in the centre<sup>4</sup>. In the *Mālatīmādhava* *Bhābhūti* describes *Mālatī* as wearing the lower garment with nivī<sup>5</sup>. Poet *Amara* (c. 700 A.D.) also mentions ladies who used to wear lower garment which was tightened up by a knot called nivī<sup>6</sup>. The *Viddhasālabhāṅjikā* informs us that the nivī was the special feature of the dress of a married lady<sup>7</sup>. The *Kavyamīmāṃsā* indicates that the Kerala women used to tie up the nivī, the knot of the lower garment, at the navel<sup>8</sup>. In the *Naiṣadhiyacaritam* *Damayantī* is also

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1. National Museum, New Delhi.

2. G.S. Ghurye, *Indian Costume*, Appendix XIV, p. 292.

3. *Kādambarī*, p. 513.

4. *Sisupalavedha*, canto VIII, v.6, Canto IX, vs. 75, 84;  
Canto X, vs. 51, 60-4.

5. M.M., Act. II, v. 1, Act III, v.1.

6. *Amarasāhita*, vs. 101, 112, 160.

7. *Viddha*, Act. I, v. 34.

8. *Kavyamīmāṃsā*, Ch. III, p. 24.



described as asking her friends to firmly fasten the knot of her lower garment<sup>1</sup>. Hemacandra tells us that the ladies of Gujrat also wore the lower garment in the same style<sup>2</sup>.

Some special features of the female dress may be mentioned here. It is evident from the *Viddhasalabhanjika* of Rajasekhara that the maidens and the married women could be easily differentiated by the mode of their dress<sup>3</sup>. The wedding dress was generally red in colour and the married women used to wear coloured garments<sup>4</sup>. The widows wore white borderless clothes<sup>5</sup>.

The female ascetic's dress consisted of a robe made of bark of the tree, an *amuka* which was tied between the breasts with a *gyastika* knot and a *yogapatta*, as is evident from the description of Savitri in the *Harsacarita*<sup>6</sup>. According to It-sing, the dress of the Buddhist nuns consisted of *sanghati*, *uttarasanga*, *amarakasa*, *sankasika* and skirt<sup>7</sup>. The skirt was long enough to cover the lower part of the body and was worn a little above the ankles.

The modesty in female dress was highly enlogised. Hemacandra says that the women of the city of Anahilapataka dressed themselves in such a way that no part of the body

1. *Maladha*, canto XVIII, v. 51.

2. *D.K.*, Vol. II, canto XI, v. 13.

3. *Viddha*, Act I, v. 34.

4. *H.C. Uch* IV, p. 216; *Uch* V, p. 241; *M.M.*, Act VI, p. 268; *Samaraloca*, II, pp. 93-101.

5. *H.C.*, *Uch*. V, p. 253.

6. *H.C.*, Ch. I, pp. 16-7.

7. *Takakusu*, p. 78; Santa Ram, *It-sing Ki Bharat Yatra*, p. 119.

remained uncovered<sup>1</sup>. While commenting on this verse, Abhayatilakagani, a commentator of the thirteenth century, adds that the beauty of the aristocratic ladies was enhanced, if they properly dressed themselves, leaving no part of the body unexposed. It may be thus inferred that a high born lady was expected to be decently dressed. Here, it may not be improper to add that Shakespeare's very popular saying - 'The apparel oft proclaims the man'<sup>2</sup>, reveals the close connection between dress and the social class and personality of the individual. Various adages bearing the importance of costume are quoted by G.S. Churye in his famous book on costume<sup>3</sup>.

#### Ornaments

The sculptures reveal that in most of the cases the ornaments worn by the females hardly left any part of the body undorned. It has been observed that various designs, fine workmanship and precious metals of these ornaments may be taken to denote the prosperity of the country<sup>4</sup>. But, precisely speaking, they reflect the prosperity of the privileged class.

First of all we shall <sup>take up</sup> ~~refer to~~ the head-ornaments. The hair-parting jewel or simantamani and the gudamani or crest-jewel may be mentioned in this connection. In the Harṣacarita

1. D.K., Vol. I, v. 37.

2. Hamlet, Act I, Scene III, line 72.

3. G.S. Churye, Indian Costume, Int., pp. 1-31.

(The author has also given very interesting information

~~information~~ about the dress of the western countries, Ibid., p. 1-

4. V. Upadhyaya, Socio-Religious Condition in Northern India,

Ch. V, p. 167.

Mālatī is described as wearing cūḍamāṇi and catulatilaka<sup>1</sup>. The Padma purāṇa of Ravisena refers to women whose hair parting lines were decorated with Padmarāgaṇi<sup>2</sup>. It also reveals that the cūḍamāṇi was worn by women<sup>3</sup>. The marriage description of the Samaraiṇa-kaha reveals that the princess' hair was decorated with the cūḍamāṇi ornament<sup>4</sup>. In the Viddhasālabhaṇjika it is said that Mrgaṅkāvali's hairs were decorated with a cūḍamāṇi and her tresses were fragrant with the garland of flowers<sup>5</sup>. The Navasahasāṅkacarita of Perimala also testifies to the use of śimantamāṇi by women, as it says that Śaśikhaṇḍa's wife Mālatī had lost her hair-parting jewel<sup>6</sup>. The Trisastīśalākāpuruṣacarita of Hemacandra speaks of the hair ornament of the bride of Lord Rābha<sup>7</sup>. The Manasollāsa of King Somesvara III refers to a female ornament which was worn on the hair-parting. It was called haṁsatilaka<sup>8</sup>.

The sculptures ascribable to this period reveal that the use of cūḍamāṇi and the head ornament, now termed as benda, was quite popular among the ladies. It appears that the benda or

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1. H.C., Uch. I, p. 49.

2. Padma Purāṇa, Part I, Parva 14, v. 143.

3. Ibid, Part II, Parva 53, v. 167.

4. Samaraiṇa, Ch. II, pp. 93-101.

5. Viddha, Act II, p. 48.

6. H.C., I.A. Vol. XXXVI, p. 157.

7. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 141.

8. Manasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, vs. 1102, 1167.

the hair-parting jewel was considered a necessary part of the jewellery of a lady, as none of the female figures at Khajuraho is without this ornament. It has been suggested that this ornament might be regarded as the sign of marriage<sup>1</sup>. A bronze figure of Sita (10th cen. A.D., South India) depicts her as wearing cuṣmāṇi<sup>2</sup> and a stone figure of a Kati depicts her as having bendā in her hair-parting line<sup>3</sup>.

The Indian women generally used various types of the ear-rings and the tops to decorate the ears<sup>4</sup>. This is quite clear from the literary sources of the period. The Priyadarsika of Harṣa says that the dāsīs of Vasavadattā were wearing kundalas in their ears<sup>5</sup>. The Padma Purāṇa of Raviṣeṇa<sup>6</sup>, and the Mahāpurāṇa of Jinaseṇa<sup>7</sup> and Uttara Purāṇa of Guṇabhadra<sup>8</sup> also reveal that these ornaments were commonly used by women. While describing the dress and ornaments of a princess, Daṇḍin refers to the ear-ring<sup>9</sup>. The Kuttanimitam speaks of a new ornament named kanakāṇḍī which was worn by the courtesans<sup>10</sup>. The Samaralocakāṇḍī

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1. U. Agarwal, Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance, Ch. VIII, p. 149.

2. Indian Sculptures in Bronze And Stones, Table VI.

3. Ibid, Table IX.

4. Cf. R.R. Diwakar, Bihar Through The Ages, Ch. IX, p. 287; T.C. Dasgupta, Aspects of Bengal Society, Ch. IV, p. 51.

5. Priya, Act III, v. 4.

6. Padma Purāṇa, Part I, parva 2, p. 38.

7. Mahā Purāṇa, Part II, parva 35, v. 204.

8. Ibid, Parva 43, v. 248.

9. D.C., Later Part, Uch. II, p. 201.

10. Kutta, v. 353.

of Haribhadrāsūri says that when the princess was being decorated as a bride, her ears were adorned with cakralata - a kind of ear-ring<sup>1</sup>. Rājasekhara also attests to the use of ear-rings among the ladies<sup>2</sup>. <sup>The</sup> Trisaṣṭisālākāpuruṣacarita of Hemacandra<sup>3</sup> and the Paumāsiricariu of Dhāhila<sup>4</sup> also reveal that the ear-rings were the common articles for adorning the ears. The Mānasollāsa gives the names of the ear ornaments of the ladies of the palace as kundala and mukula<sup>5</sup>. The Rajatarangini of Kalhana tells us that these ornaments were worn by the ladies of Kashmir also<sup>6</sup>.

The Indian sculptures of the period also reveal that the kundalas and the karnaphūlas were in general use. In one of the Bhuvaneśvara sculptures a nāyikā is shown as writing a letter. Her jewellery includes a pair of tops in the shape of a big flower<sup>7</sup>. Another figure of a lady also depicts the karnaphūlas in the ears<sup>8</sup>. The figures of ladies <sup>depicted in</sup> ~~carved on~~ the <sup>sculpture of</sup> ~~famous~~ Khajuraho temples furnish abundant proof of the fact that the kundalas and karnaphūlas were widely prevalent<sup>9</sup>. The

1. Samarāṅga, Ch. II, pp. 93-101.

2. Karp., Act I, p. 250; Kavyamīmāṃsā, Ch. III, p. 22.

3. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 143; Vol. II, Ch. II, p. 64.

4. Cf. D. Sharma, Rajasthan Through The Ages, Ch. III, p. 463.

5. Mānasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, v. 1168.

6. Raj., V, 373.

7. Indian Sculptures in Bronze And Stones, Table XVI.

8. Ibid, Table IX.

9. Right front Viṣvanātha temple; Right outside Viṣvanātha temple; Inner Pradakṣiṇā Viṣvanātha temple; left outside Viṣvanātha temple; left outside Dulādeo temple, U. Agarwal, Khajuraho sculptures And Their Significance, Plate II, Fig 10, Plate V, Figs. 1, 2, 23.

Apsaras, as represented in the sculptures of North Bengal (12th cen. A.D.), are shown as wearing kundalas in the ears<sup>1</sup>.

The sculptures of South India reveal the popularity of these ornaments in that region. The figure of a Cola queen (10th cen. A.D.) <sup>depicts</sup> her as wearing ear-ornaments which are not clearly visible, but they appear to be ear-rings or some other articles of the same type<sup>2</sup>. A pair of big circular ear-rings adorn the ears of a nati<sup>3</sup>.

After giving an account of the jewellery for the head and the ears, we now come to the neck-ornaments. Various big and small necklaces (hāras) were in vogue in our time and many necklaces were worn simultaneously. Bāṇa's description of Malatī's dress and ornaments reveals that she was wearing a hara of round pearls which were as big as amalaki flowers, and a long necklace (Pralambamālā) of green and red jewels<sup>4</sup>. In the Ratnavālī of king Harṣa it is said that the princess Ratnavālī was recognised through her necklace which was studded with precious jewels (ratnamālā)<sup>5</sup>. The Edṇapurāṇa of Raviṣeṇa also testifies to the use of hara by the ladies<sup>6</sup>. Jinasenācārya

1. S. Kramrisch, The Art of India, Plate 143.

2. Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stone, Table II.

3. Ibid, Table IX.

4. H.C., Uch. I, p. 42.

5. Ratnā, Act I, p. 15.

6. Padma Purāṇa, Part III, Parva 70, v. 57.



(c. 710-90 A.D.) and Guṇabhadraçārya (c. 898 A.D.) tell us that the hāra was very popular ornament of women. Both of them refer to common women folk whose necks were adorned with necklaces<sup>1</sup>. Daṇḍin in his *Daśakumāracarita* refers to the ornaments worn by the princess; the string or hāra of the *Padmarāgaṇi* was included in the list<sup>2</sup>. We find in the *Malatīmādhava* that when *Mālatī* was being dressed up as a bride, the pearl necklaces were brought for her<sup>3</sup>. The 'muktāhāra' is also referred to in the *Kuttanīmata*<sup>4</sup>. The *Samarāṭṭakā* refers to the long pearl necklace of the heroine which came up to the hips, and the dusurullaka of pearls round her neck<sup>5</sup>. The dusurullaka seems to be a necklace which encircled the neck. Harakatanani Kanṭhikā and amuktāvali are mentioned in the *Kuvalayamala Katha*<sup>6</sup>. In the *Kavyamīmāṃsā* *Rājasekhara* gives information about the regional variety of ornaments. He says that the ladies of Bengal were fond of wearing hāra which adorned their breasts<sup>7</sup>, those of the *Pañcala* country were the long necklaces which touched their navels<sup>8</sup>. In the *Karpūramanjari* it is said that *Karpūramanjari* was wearing a choice necklace of monster-pearls<sup>9</sup>. In the

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1. Mahapurāṇa, Part II, Parva 26, v. 126.

2. D.C., Later part, Uch. II, p. 201.

3. M.M., Act VI, p. 263.

4. Kutta, v. 605.

5. Samarāṭṭa, II, pp. 93.

6. Kuvalaya, p. 7, lines 27-8.

7. Kavyamīmāṃsā, Ch. III, p. 21.

8. Ibid., p. 22.

9. Karp., Act I, p. 250.



Karakandācarīu of Muni Kanakāmarā Padmavati, the wife of king Dhādivāhana, is described as wearing a pearl-necklace<sup>1</sup>. Hemacandra also refers to the gold neck-ornaments of women<sup>2</sup>. The Manasollāsa refers to the hāra and other neck-ornaments of the royal women. These were studded with Mānikya, Prāvala and other jewels<sup>3</sup>. The Naisadhiyacarita refers to the pearl necklace<sup>4</sup>. It tells us that the neck of Damayanti was adorned with the seven stringed pearl-necklace<sup>5</sup>.

Some of the inscriptions of our time also suggest that women were fond of wearing necklaces. The Naihātī plate of Vallālasena (c. 1158 - 78 A.D.) refers to the women of royalty as wearing pearl necklaces.<sup>6</sup>

The sculptures of the period also bear testimony to the fact that Indian women wore necklaces of many varieties. In one of the scenes of the temple of Bhuvaneśvara, Parāsurameśvara (c. 750 A.D.) at Bhuvaneśvara, Pārvatī is depicted as wearing necklace<sup>7</sup>. The figures of Apasaras as depicted in the Bhuvaneśvara sculptures are profusely bedecked with necklaces and other ornaments<sup>8</sup>. The same is noticed in regard to the Khajuraho

1. K.C., Ch. I, p. 7.

2. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 143; Vol. II, Ch. II, p. 64.

3. Manasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, vs. 1169-70.

4. Naisadha, canto XV, p. 75

5. Ibid, v. 44.

6. H.G. Majumdar, Inscriptions of Bengal, Vol. XII, p. 77.

7. The Golden Age of Indian Art, plate 67.

8. Ibid, plate 63;

(Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stone, Tables XVI, XX;

Indian Temple Sculpture, Ed. A. Gossami, plates 42-46.

sculptures. These figures have two ornaments in the neck- the necklace and a big hāra. The necklace appears to be a chain with pendants shaped like petals and buds<sup>1</sup>. The hāra was a string of beads and came up to the navel<sup>2</sup>. Sometimes it had double<sup>3</sup>, triple<sup>4</sup> or five strings<sup>5</sup>. Almost every female figure is decked with these ornaments. The figure of a mayikā on the temple of Baroli (10th cen. A.D.), Rajasthan, is wearing necklaces and a long stanahāra with three strings<sup>6</sup>. The Pallī Sarasvatīs have many neck ornaments/ four stringed necklace which touches the navel, a pura-sūtra or a stana-sūtra round the breast and hansali and jhālaras. An idea of the Rajasthani dress may be formed from these two Pallī-Sarasvatīs<sup>7</sup>.

Sculptures from Bengal also reveal the popularity of necklaces among the ladies. The image of Gāṅgā (Sena period, 12th century) has necklaces and a long hāra<sup>8</sup>. The figure of Apasaras is depicted as having twisted, long necklace besides other ornaments<sup>9</sup>.

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1. U. Agarwal, Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance, Ch. VIII, Plate IV, Figs. 2, 3, 11, 16, 18, 20, 21.

2. Right niche inside Sānti Nātha temple.

3. Inside back niche Viśvanātha temple; Back inner Pradakṣiṇā Lakṣmī temple.

4. Vārāhī goddess in the Museum.

5. Pārvatī temple; U. Agarwal, Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance, Ch. VIII, p. 162.

6. Indian Temple Sculpture, Ed. A. Coomaraswamy, Plate 76.

7. D. Sharma, Rajasthan Through The Ages, Ch. XII, p. 464.

The figures may be seen at the beginning of the book.

Early Chauhan Dynasties by the same author, Bikaner Jaina Lekha Sangraha, p. 105.

8. C. Sivaramamurti, Indian Sculptures, Plate 43.

9. S. Kramrisch, The Art of India, Plate 143.

The figure of tree-goddess (Gyaraspur, M.P. c. 1000 A.D.) also has many short and long necklaces<sup>1</sup>. The images of Sarasvati<sup>2</sup>, Parvati<sup>3</sup> and Nāyikā<sup>4</sup> (Jāmsot, 12th cen. A.D.) are wearing necklaces and long stanahāras. The figure of a lady busy in ball-playing has a thick ornament (Hamsali) around the neck and a long hara of one string<sup>5</sup>. It seems that she is a woman of ordinary family.

The South Indian sculptures also indicate the popularity of these neck ornaments in that part of the country. A study of these sculptures unravels that like their northern sisters the South Indian women were also fond of wearing short and long necklaces in the same style. The images of a servant-girl<sup>6</sup> (cave 21, Ellora), a female door-keeper<sup>7</sup> (Kailāsa temple, c. 753-783 A.D.), a dancing girl<sup>8</sup> (Tanjore gallery c. 900-1100 A.D.), a Cola queen<sup>9</sup> (10th cen. A.D.), Sita<sup>10</sup> and a Nati<sup>11</sup> (10th cen. A.D.) are some of the pieces of sculptures which corroborate the above statement.

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1. Ibid, Plate 119.
  2. Allahabad Museum, Fig. No. 1005.
  3. Ibid, Fig. No. 1008.
  4. Ibid, Figs. No. 1048-51.
  5. Ibid, Fig. No. 284.
  6. Louis Frédéric, Indian Temples And Sculptures, Plate 125.
  7. The Art of The Pallavas, Ed. A Goswami, Plate 31.
  8. Louis Frédéric, Indian Temples And Sculptures, Plate 219.
  9. Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stone, Table II.
  10. Ibid, Table VI.
  11. Ibid, Table IX.

Let us now come to the armlet, bracelet, bangles, rings and hastaphūla. It may be pointed out that these were the favourite ornaments of women all over India. The Harṣacarita<sup>1</sup> and the Kādambarī<sup>2</sup> of Bāṇa represent Mālatī and Kādambarī as wearing gold barcelet and bracelet made of Padmarāgamani respectively. Some of the Jaina purāṇas also give us an glimpse of the social life of the contemporary period. The Padma Purāṇa of Haviṣeṇa and the Mahāpurāṇa of Jinaseṇa refer to the bracelets worn by women<sup>3</sup>. The Amarusātaka of Amara describes ladies as wearing bracelet<sup>4</sup>. Dandin in his Dasakumāracarita mentions bracelet as one of the favourite ornaments of women<sup>5</sup>. The Kuṭṭanimatan, a work of the eighth century, gives a detailed account of the dress and ornaments of the courtesans. It mentions ring, bracelet and a peculiar type of armlet called Valayakalāpi<sup>6</sup>. Rājasekhara refers to rows of bracelets with which the hands of the princess were adorned<sup>7</sup>. Among the ornaments with which Sumangalā and Sunandā were being adorned, Hemacandra included bracelets and armlets<sup>8</sup>. Likewise, while

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1. H.C., Uch I, p. 48.

2. Kādambarī, p.

3. Padmapurāṇa, Part I, Parva 14, v. 141;  
Mahā Purāṇa, Part II, Parva 26, v. 126.

4. Amarusātaka, v. 35.

5. D.C., Earlier part, Uch. IV, p. 76.

6. Kuṭṭa., vs. 29, 294, 342.

7. Karp., Act II, p. 250.

8. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 143.

describing the costume and jewellery of the musician women, he mentions these items of jewellery<sup>1</sup>. It is said in the *Naisadhiya-carita* that the arms of Damayantī were looking graceful due to the bracelets of conchshell<sup>2</sup>. The *Visaladeva Rāso* refers to bracelets, armlets, rings and bangles among the favourite ornaments of Rajput women<sup>3</sup>. Bājubandha, a kind of armlet, and bahulī - a bracelet - were popular among the women of Bengal<sup>4</sup>.

The Indian temple sculptures reveal women's fondness for various ornaments. One of the scenes carved on the Parāśurāmesvara temple (c. 750 A.D.), Bhuvanesvara, depicts Lord Śiva and his consort Pārvatī seated on the mount Kailāsa. The goddess is wearing armlets and bangles besides other ornaments<sup>5</sup>. The *nayikā* writing a letter (Bhuvanesvara, 9th cen. A.D.)<sup>6</sup> holding a mirror (Baital Deul temple, Rājarañi temple—9th to 12th cen. A.D.), are bedecked with armlet, bracelet and bangles<sup>6</sup>. Nine different designs of the ladies' armlets have been noticed in the Khajuraho sculptures<sup>7</sup>. The female figures wear bracelets and

1. Ibid, Vol. II, Ch. II, p. 64.

2. *Naisadha*, canto XV, v. 45.

3. V.R. Canto I, vs. 22, 26, 58, Canto II, vs. 14, 26, 35, canto III, v. 22.

4. T.C. Dasgupta, *Aspects of Bengali Society*, Ch. III, pp. 54-5.

5. *The Golden Age of Indian Art*, Plate 67.

6. *Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stones*, Table XVI; *The Golden Age of Indian Art*, Plate 63; *Indian Temple Sculptures* Ed. A. Goswami, Plates 45-6-

7. U. Agarwal, *Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance*, Ch. VIII, p. 153; Plate IV, Figs. 5, 7, 9, 12; Plate V, Figs. 1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 12.

bangles also. One of them has a plain triangular hara rounded up to clasp the wrist<sup>1</sup>. Another type of bracelet consists of shell-like pieces which jointly form a ring around the wrist<sup>2</sup>. A kankana consisting of pointed knobs enhances the beauty of the wrist of a lady who is depicted as writing a letter<sup>3</sup>. A pair of bracelets having a set of beaded bangles in between them, may be seen on another female figure<sup>4</sup>. An ornament having five rings for each finger and thumb and connected wither directly to the bracelet through a chain which falls on the back of the palm or to a circular disc studded with jewels and then to the kankana, is also found among the jewellery which adorn the female figures<sup>5</sup>. The Pallī Sarasvatī's (Bikaner Museum) also have armlet, kankana, a different kind of bangles and rings on each finger and thumb<sup>6</sup>. The figure of goddess Ganga (South Bengal, 10th cen. A.D.) has bracelet and armlet on both hands<sup>7</sup>. A female attendant from Bihar (11-13th cen. A.D.) also has similar ornaments<sup>8</sup>.

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1. Left outside Viśvanātha temple.
  2. Right outside Viśvanātha temple.
  3. Left inner Pradaksinā, Pārśvanātha temple.
  4. Left inner Pradaksinā Pārśvanātha temple, outside Dulādeo temple;

5. Inside right corner niche Śāntinātha temple;

~~This, Plate IV, Fig. 13, niche~~

U. Agarwal, *Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance*, Ch. VIII, pp. 155-6.; Plate IV, Fig. 13.

6. Bikaner Jaina Lekha Samgraha, p. 105.
7. G.S. Ghurye, *Indian Costume*, Plate 235.
8. Ibid, Plate 243.



The South Indian sculptures also depict women with these ornaments. A female door-keeper (c. 753-783 A.D.) has armlets on her arms<sup>1</sup>. A female figure (Pārvatī, Kailāsa temple, Ellora 8th cen. A.D.) is shown as having bracelets on her wrists<sup>2</sup>. The jewellery of a Cola queen (10th cen. A.D.) include bangles, armlets and rings on the fingers and thumb<sup>3</sup>. A stone figure of a natī is shown wearing rings on all the fingers of the hands, bracelets and three armlets above the elbows<sup>4</sup>. These sculptured specimens of our time go a long way in attesting to the wide-spread use of these ornaments in India.

The girdle or karadhani, an ornament to decorate the waist, was fancifully worn by the women of our time. The Harṣacarita of Bāṇa refers to Mālatī who was wearing a tinkling girdle besides other ornaments<sup>5</sup>. The Kādambarī informs us that the girdle was worn by courtesans<sup>6</sup>, female attendants<sup>7</sup>, ladies of aristocracy<sup>8</sup> and common women folk. Kādambarī, a Gāndhārva princess also wore a girdle<sup>9</sup>. The Priyadarsika of king Harṣa

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1. Indian Temple Sculpture, Ed. A. Goswami, Plate 31.

2. Ibid., Plate 32.

3. Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stones, Table II.

4. Ibid., Table IX.

5. H.C., Uch. I, p. 47.

6. Kādambarī, p. 29.

7. Ibid., p. 192.

8. Ibid., p. 162.

9. Ibid., p.



describes the jewellery of the female attendants of queen Vasavadatta which include golden girdles<sup>1</sup>. The Padma Purāṇa of Haviṣeṇa frequently refers to women whose waists were adorned with mekhalās or girdles<sup>2</sup>. Jinaseṇācārya says that the queens of king Bharata used to wear girdles<sup>3</sup>. Guṇabhadraācārya also says that the jingling sound of the girdles of the women of Varāṇasī attracted all and sundry<sup>4</sup>. The Amarusataka refers to the ladies who wore girdles<sup>5</sup>. It is said in the Daśamūracarita that the princess Kandukavati had to adjust the strings of her jewelled girdle while playing ball<sup>6</sup>. The author imagines that the milky ocean that surrounds the earth seems to be a girdle fastened around the waist of the lady-earth<sup>7</sup>. Bhavabhūti in his Mālatīmādhava refers to the 'mekhalāvalaya' worn by Madayanika<sup>8</sup>. The Śiśupālavadha of Megha reveals that the girdle was one of the common ornaments of women<sup>9</sup>. The Kuttanimita refers to the girdle worn by the courtesans<sup>10</sup>. The use of girdle is also found in many other works of the period, e.g. the Kuvalaya<sup>11</sup>.

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1. Priya, Act III, v. 4.

2. Padma Purāṇa, Part I, Parva 14, v. 138; Part III, Parva 70, vs. 55, 64, 65, Parva 73, v. 36; Parva 85, v. 135.

3. Mahāpurāṇa, Part II, Parva 37, v. 42.

4. Ibid, Parva 43, v. 251.

5. Amarusataka, vs. 101, 109.

6. D.C., Uch. VI, pp. 122-4.

7. Ibid, Uch. I, p. 5.

8. M.M., Act VI, v. 2.


9. Śiśupālavadha, canto X, vs. 62, 83, 85, canto XIII, vs. 32, 34.

10. Kutta., v. 295.

11. Kuvalaya, p. 7, lines 27-8.

viddhaśālabhañjika

Karpūraṇājarī<sup>1</sup>, /Karkandācarī<sup>2</sup>, Trisastīśālākāpurnācaritā<sup>3</sup>,  
 Maṇasollāsa<sup>4</sup> etc. / <sup>They</sup> testify to the wide spread prevalence of  
 girdle as one of the favourite ornaments of women.

Some of the sculptured specimens also supplement  the information gleaned from the literary sources in this regard. In the temple of Paraśurāmeśvara (Bhuvaneśvara) Lord Śiva and Pārvatī are depicted as sitting on the mount Kailāsa. The jewellery of the goddess includes girdle with many hanging strings<sup>5</sup>. One of the Bhuvaneśvara sculptures depicts a nāyikā writing a letter. She is wearing the girdle of the same style<sup>6</sup>. A nāyikā with a mirror (Rājraṇī temple) is also wearing a girdle on her waist<sup>7</sup>.

The girdle with a broad band and many strings covering the thighs down to the knees can be noticed on the female figures of the Khajurāho temples<sup>8</sup>. The image of Sarasvatī on the Pallu pillar (Bikaner Museum) has a heavy designed kaṭisūtra with many frilled strings and pendants<sup>9</sup>. A Jaina goddess on the Dilwara temple (c. 1200 A.D.) is shown as wearing girdle with

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1. Karp., Act II, p. 250; Viddha, Act II, vs. 6-7.
  2. K.C., Ch. VII, 13, p. 68.
  3. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 143; Vol. II, Ch. II, p. 64.
  4. Maṇasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, v. 1172.
  5. The Golden Age of Indian Art, Plate 67.
  6. Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stone, Plate XVI.
  7. Indian Temple Sculpture, Ed. A. Goswami, Plate 45.
  8. U. Agarwal, Khajurāho Sculptures and Their Significance, Ch. VIII, p. 157; Figs. 49, 54, 59, 60, 61, 81, 85, 92, 93, 94, 96.

many strings<sup>1</sup>. Likewise the image of Gaṅgā (Pala period, North Bengal) has the girdle of the same type<sup>2</sup>. The figure of a female attendant (11-13th cen. A.D., Bihar) shows her as wearing girdle<sup>3</sup>. The figures of the Nāyikās (11th cen. A.D., Jamsot-Allahabad) are bedecked with the jewelled girdles of the same type<sup>4</sup>. An image of a lady has a girdle of three strings, but it was not bejewelled or cut in designs<sup>5</sup>.

The girdle of many strings is not conspicuous by its absence in the sculptures of South India. The figures of a female devotee (c. 983 A.D.) from Mysore<sup>6</sup> and the bronze image of a Cola queen (10th cen. A.D.) reveal the same type of girdle<sup>7</sup>.

Now we come to the mūpura which seems to have been quite popular in our time. The literary works of the period depict their female characters as wearing jingling mūpuras<sup>8</sup>. Besides mūpura the Manasollāsa also refers to andukā worn by royal

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1. Indian Temple Sculpture, Ed. A. Goswami, Plate 96.
  2. G.S. Ghurye, Indian Costume, Plate 241.
  3. Ibid, Plate 243.
  4. Allahabad Museum, Figs. no. 1047-51.
  5. Ibid, Fig. no. 284.
  6. Indian Temple Sculpture, Ed. A. Goswami, Plate 75.
  7. Indian Sculpture In Bronze And Stone, Table II.
  8. H.C., Uch. I, p. 47; Uch. IV, p. 182; Ratnā, Act I, vs. 16, 18; Priya, Act III, v. 4; Padma Purāṇa, Part I, Parva 14, v. 137; Part III, Parva 71, vs. 64-5; Mahāpurāṇa, Part II, Parva 43, v. 251; Amarusataka, v. 31; D.C., Earlier Part, Uch. IV, p. 76, later part, Uch. V, p. 306; Kāṭya, v. Karp., Act II, v. 13; K.C., Ch. III, 2, p. 23; T.S.P., Vol. I, p. 143, Vol. II, Ch. II, p. 64; Śrīrāmāyaṇa — ?

ladies<sup>1</sup>. The nāyikas, as depicted in the Bhuvaneśvara and Khajuraho temples, wear mūpuras on their ankles<sup>2</sup>. The image of Pallu Sarasvatī (Bikaner Museum) is profusely decorated with ornaments that hardly leave any part of the body unadorned; on her ankles she has Payleb<sup>3</sup>. The figure of a lady (11th cen., Jamsot) has some katakas over the ankles<sup>4</sup>. The South Indian sculptures also depict women as wearing anklets<sup>5</sup>.

The toe-ring may be mentioned as the last item of jewellery with which women bedecked themselves though they were not so common. The Mānasollāsa gives its name as śūdrīka<sup>6</sup>. The toe rings were worn either on the toe and first two fingers<sup>7</sup> or on all of them. The figures of āra<sup>8</sup> (10th cen. A.D., M.P.) and of a cela queen<sup>9</sup> (10th cen. A.D., South India) depict the rings on all the fingers of the feet. The figures of a Madankai Hoyasala, (12th cen., Belur,) Kakatiya, Havankonda have rings ~~wherever~~ on all the fingers of the feet<sup>10</sup>.

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1. Mānasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, vs. 1125, 1172.
  2. G.S. Ghurye, Indian Costume, Plate 237; U. Agarwal, Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance, Figs. 60, 77, 96, 101.
  3. Bikaner Jain Lekha Sangraha, p. 106.
  4. Allahabad Museum, Fig. no. 1047.
  5. Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stone, Table II.
  6. Mānasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, vs. 1126, 1174.
  7. U. Agarwal, Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance, Ch. VIII, p. 157.
  8. Allahabad Museum, Fig. no. 241.
  9. Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stone, Table II.
  10. C. Sivaramamurti, Indian Sculpture, Plates 46-7.

It is interesting to note that the nose-ring or natha is conspicuous by its absence either in the literature or in the sculpture. The reason attributed to its absence, is the fact that it came into vogue after the Muslim conquest<sup>1</sup>. Thus, we see that the women had a fancy for wearing various ornaments which gracefully adorned their limbs right from the head to the toe. It is to be noted that the rich ladies used to wear gold ornaments studded with pearls and jewels, while in the lower strata of society, as is evident from the *Kuvalayasālākathā*, women had to content themselves with the ornaments studded with shining glass pieces<sup>2</sup>. This statement throws light on the class character of ornaments and dress. A close scrutiny of the sculptures reveals that the goddesses and royal women are depicted with profuse ornaments made of various designs and studded with many jewels<sup>3</sup>, while the women of ordinary families and of servant class are represented as wearing ornaments lesser in number and devoid of jewels<sup>4</sup>.

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1. C.V. Vaidya, *History of Medieval Hindu India*, Vol. II, Ch. II, p. 188.

2. *Kuvalaya*, p. 8, line 2.

3. See e.g. *Indian Temple Sculpture*, Ed. A. Goswami, Plate 96; C. Sivaramamurti, *Indian Sculpture*, Plate 43; *Bikaner Jaina Lekha Sangraha*, p. 106; *Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stone*, Table II.

4. G.S. Ghurye, *Indian Costume*, Plate 243 ; Allahabad Museum, Fig. no. 284; *The Art of The Pallavas*, Ed. A. Goswami, Plates 27, 31; *Supra*, p. —

### Fashions of Coiffure and Cosmetics

Various stylish hair-dos of women suggest that they had a high sense of decoration and beauty. The Harṣacarita of Bāṇa tells us that the hair of Mālātī were tied up in the form of a loosed jūṭika<sup>1</sup>. The Daśakumāracarita refers to a princess whose hairs were loosely tied up<sup>2</sup>. The Kāvyamīmāṃsā says that the ladies of Kerala had curly hairs which looked charming when arranged in the shape of a jūṭa<sup>3</sup>.

It appears that women were fond of decorating their tresses with wreaths of flowers. The Padma Purāṇa of Ravisena frequently refers to women whose braids bore flowers<sup>4</sup>. In the Amaruśataka a woman is depicted as having flowers in her hair<sup>5</sup>. The Mālātī-madhavam says that, when Mālātī was being dressed up as a bride, a head ornament of white flowers was given to her to adorn the hair<sup>6</sup>. In the Viddhaśālābhāṅjika princess Mṛgāṅkāvalī is shown as having flowers in her tresses<sup>7</sup>. The Triṣaṭṭisālākā-puruṣacarita of Hemacandra refers to royal ladies as well as to musician-women whose hair were decorated with flowers<sup>8</sup>. In the Rāja-taraṅgini of Kālhana describes the beauty of the maidens who adorned the court of king Harṣa. He says that they had long

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1. H.C., Uch. I, p. 49.

2. D.C., Later Part, Uch. II, p. 201.

3. Kāvyamīmāṃsā, Ch. III, p. 24.

4. Padma Purāṇa, Part I, Parva 2, v. 211; Part III, Parva 73, v. 131.

5. Amaruśataka, v. 107.

6. M.M., Act VI, p. 268.

7. Viddha, Act II, p. 48.

8. T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 143; Vol. II, Ch. II, p. 64.



tresses with wreaths of flowers. The locks of hair on the foreheads were decorated with ornaments. The bunches of golden iaxi were gracefully tucked up at the end of their tresses<sup>1</sup>.

Various fashions of female coiffures may be seen in the sculptures of our period. The Khajuraho sculptures are very significant from this point of view. A woman who is depicted as playing on flute had her hair tied in a knot at the back with one jewel on the top and another hanging down. A string of beads is also noticeable over her head from one ear to the other<sup>2</sup>. The same type of the hair style is found in other scenes depicted in the Lakṣmaṇa and Viśvanātha temples<sup>3</sup>. In one of the scenes of the Kāṇḍariā temple a woman is shown with a knot of hair at the back of her neck. The knot is like ~~head~~ a pointed tumbler. The Horla, an ornament for the head is decorated over her head<sup>4</sup>. Another type of the hair style is also noticeable in these sculptures. A woman in the Viśvanātha temple is shown as twisting her long hair into a yani which <sup>is</sup> was combed upwards and are <sup>is</sup> hanging in front of the face<sup>5</sup>. One of the scenes of the Pārśvanātha temple depicts a woman whose hair are gathered above

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1. Raj. VII, 928-9.

2. Inner Pradaksina Viśvanātha temple.

3. Left outside Lakṣmaṇa temple; left outside Viśvanātha temple.

4. Right front outside Kāṇḍariā temple.

5. Left outside Viśvanātha temple.



the head and are tied in a knot on the top of her head, resembling the characteristic knot of the sanyāsis<sup>1</sup>. The figure of a Surasundari belonging to the time of the Gurjara-Pratihāra (10th cen. A.D.) has a knot of the hair on the back<sup>2</sup>. The flower-decorated, high-domed coiffure may be seen in one of the female figures from Rajorgarh, Bikaner<sup>3</sup> (12th cen. A.D.).

The artistic hair-dos of the female figures in the Bhuvanesvara sculpture reveal the aesthetic sense of women. Some of them are shown with the knot of hair tied on the back<sup>4</sup>; the charm is also lent to the knot by the use of ornaments. The curly locks of hair may be seen on the forehead. Some other figures suggest that the ladies used to arrange their hair in two bundles which hang on either side of the head<sup>5</sup>. Some of the South Indian sculptures also reveal the high-domed style of hair-dressing<sup>6</sup>. Another style in which the knot of hair hangs on the back is also noticeable.

These stylish hair-dressings suggest that women were very particular in arranging their hair in charming manners.

1. Left outside Pārsvanātha temple; U. Agarwal, Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance, Ch. VII, 136-7; The Art of the Chandellas, Plate 36.
2. C. Sivaramamurti, Indian Sculpture, Plate 35.
3. Ibid, Plate 36.
4. Indian Sculptures In Bronze And Stone, Tables XVI, XX.
5. A.S. Altekar, The Position of Women In Hindu Civilisation, Plate VIII, Figs. C., D.
6. The Golden Age of Indian Art, Plate 39-40, 45-6.

It is worth mentioning that the maidens and married women could decorate their hair as they wished, ~~the~~ widows, however, were not allowed to arrange their hair in beautiful styles. They simply tied up their hair in the form of a braid as is evident from the Harṣacarita<sup>1</sup>. The Pehoa Prasasti of Mahendrapāla (c. 900 A.D.) reveals that the widows had rough and straight hair as they did not arrange them properly<sup>2</sup>.

The literary sources reveal that in order to perfume their bodies the royal and aristocratic ladies used to anoint ~~their~~ <sup>them</sup> bodies with various unguents. They used to besmeer camphor, saffron and sandal paste over their bodies<sup>3</sup>. The Prthvirāja-vijaya says that the incense was burnt to dry and perfume the hair<sup>4</sup>. It seems that on the auspicious occasions like marriage the brides and other invited ladies of aristocracy adorned their breasts, palms and cheeks with foliage patterns<sup>5</sup> and applied tilaka on their foreheads<sup>6</sup>. A Prakrit text of the eleventh century says that the ladies used to put on sandal and oil

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1. H.C., Ch. V, p. 253.

2. E.I., Vol. I, p. 246.

3. Amarsataka, V. 105; M.M., Act VI, p. 268; Samarāloca, II, pp. 93-101; Kavalaya, p. 113, lines 10-12; A.M.K., Ch. II, p. 75; T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 143.

4. P.V., canto V, v. 155.

5. Mahāpurāṇa, Part II, v. 248; Samarāloca, II, pp. 93-101; Kavalaya, p. 113, lines 10-12; T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 143.

6. Ibid. —

tilak-marks on their foreheads<sup>1</sup>. They also applied collyrium in their eyes<sup>2</sup> with kajjalasāṣaka<sup>3</sup>; their lips were brightened with wax and then they were dyed red<sup>4</sup>. The maḥāvāra or ālata was applied to their feet<sup>5</sup>.

The above account gives an idea <sup>of the</sup> ~~of the~~ royal ladies' toilet, a fuller view of which may be had from the marriage descriptions in the Samarāṅga of Haribhadra Sūri (8th cen. A.D.) and the Triṣaṭṭiśālekāpuruṣacarita of Hemacandra (12th cen. A.D.).

Talking about the poor village-women, Udyotana Sūri (c. 778 A.D.) says that instead of saffron they used to anoint their faces with turmeric<sup>7</sup>. In the Karakandācarit of Muni Kanakāmara (c. 1065 A.D.) it is said that when king Karakandā was entering the city, then in order to see the king as soon as possible some women hurriedly put collyrium not in the eyes but on their lips<sup>8</sup>. Kalhana also refers to women whose eyes were looking beautiful due to collyrium<sup>9</sup>.

1. Ā.M.K., Ch. XI, v. 1, Ch. XXIII, v. 637.

2-3. Mahāpurāṇa, Vol. I, Ch. II, v. 247; Samarāṅga, II, pp. 93-101; Viḍḍha, Act I, p. 38; Karp., Act I, v. 21; Ā.M.K., Ch. III, v. 76; T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 143.

4. Karp., Act I, v. 13; Naisadha, canto XV, v. 43.

5. Amarusataka, v. 107; Samarāṅga, pp. 93-101; Naisadha, canto IV, v. 46.

6. Samarāṅga, II, pp. 93-101; T.S.P., Vol. I, Ch. II, pp. 142-3.

7. Kṛvalaya, p. 8, line 2.

8. K.C., Ch. III, p. 23.

9. Rāj., VII, 929.

Besides other beauty-aids, the married women also used to put on sindura or vermillion mark on their forehead<sup>1</sup>. The use of camphor, sandal, saffron and lac-dye was very popular among the courtesans<sup>2</sup>.

Some of the literary works reveal that in the matter of cosmetics women were following customs and traditions of their own regions. Rajasekhara (10th cen. A.D.) refers to the ladies of Bengal who anointed their bodies with sandal and agar<sup>3</sup>. Speaking about the Maratha maidens, he says that the saffron was rubbed on their cheeks<sup>4</sup>; the ladies of Kerala, tied their hair in a distinctive style<sup>5</sup>. The Sṛṅgaramanjarikathā of Bhojadeva (997-1062 A.D.) tells us that the Hūna ladies used to rub saffron on their cheeks<sup>6</sup>. The Manasollāsa of king Somesvara (1127-38 A.D.) also refers to the regional variety of dress ornaments and cosmetics of women. It says that the ladies of Maharashtra put on sindura on their forehead and arranged their hair in such a style that the locks of hair adorned their forehead<sup>7</sup>.

All the ~~the~~ decoration and beautification could not <sup>have</sup> been properly done without the use of mirror. So we find that it was

1. Manasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, v. 1186; Pavanadūtam, vs. 40, 42, 43, 44; V.R., canto III, v. 97.

2. Ratna, vs. 7, 101, 112.

3. Kavyamīmāṃsā, Ch. III, p. 21.

4. Karp., Act I, v. 16.

5. Infra, p.

6. S.M.K., <sup>Table</sup> Table X, p. 75.

7. Manasollāsa, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, v. 1186.

a necessary accessory to toilet for the fashion-loving ladies of our period. The literary texts often refer to its use by the ladies in toilet<sup>1</sup>.

Besides the testimony of literature, the accounts of the travellers also contain references to the use of cosmetics by women. Hsuan-Tsang observed that the Indian women stained their teeth red and black<sup>2</sup>.

Some of the inscriptions of the period also give information about ladies' toilet. The Khajurāho inscription (953 A.D.) suggests that the sindūra was used by the married ladies only as it says that the women of the enemy were deprived of the use of sindūra as their lord was killed by the king<sup>3</sup>. Similarly some other inscriptions reveal that the wives of the enemies could no longer use collyrium and red colour over their lips<sup>4</sup>. These inscriptions also indicate that the widows were not entitled to decorate their persons.

The Khajurāho and Bhuvanēśvara sculptures corroborate the testimony of the literature and the inscriptions. The scenes carved on the Khajurāho temples depict women busy with toilet. They are shown as applying powder and aṅgarāga<sup>5</sup> to their faces

1. K.P., Sinhakumārakathanakam, p. 48; A.M.K., Ch. IV, v. 5.

2. Watters, Vol. I, p. 151.

3. E.I., Vol. I, p. 129.

4. Ibid, Vol. I, p. 248; Vol. XV, p. 296; V. Upadhyaya, Prachīna Bharatiya Abhilekhaṇ Ka Adhyayana, p. 109.

5. Left outside Kandariyā, Vāmana, Parāvanātha and Lakṣmaṇa temples, right outside Kandariyā and Viṣvanātha temples.

and bodies, collyrium to the eyes<sup>1</sup>, putting tilaka on the forehead<sup>2</sup> and sindūra in the hair-parting<sup>3</sup>, colouring feet with Alta<sup>4</sup>. Some of the female figures are depicted with the tattoo marks of a lizard and scorpion<sup>5</sup>. It appears that the figures of these creatures were made not for decoration only, but also as a safeguard against the effect of their bites<sup>6</sup>. A woman is also shown in the act of making foliage pattern on her waist with a pencil in her hand<sup>7</sup>. The Khajuraho sculptures depict women as holding mirror or āraśī, while undergoing the process of applying cosmetics to their persons<sup>8</sup>. The Rājarānī temple, Bhuvanēśvara depicts women in the act of putting sindūra and holding mirror to see their decoration.

Thus it may be inferred that women had an aesthetic sense and knew various ways of decorating their bodies with the help of dress, ornaments and cosmetics.

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1. Right outside Pārśvanātha temple; left outside Viśvanātha temple.
  2. Left and right outside Viśvanātha temple.
  3. Left outside Kāṇḍariyā and Lakṣmaṇa temples; left Pradakṣiṇā Lakṣmaṇa temple; back outside Viśvanātha temple.
  4. Left outside Lakṣmaṇa, Pārśvanātha, <sup>and</sup> Viśvanātha temples; back outside Dūlādeo temple.
  5. Right Pradakṣiṇā Kāṇḍariyā and Viśvanātha temples.
  6. U. Agarwal, Khajuraho Sculptures And Their Significance, Ch. VII, p. 145.
  7. Back outside Vāmana temple,
  8. Left outside Vāmana temple; left outside Kāṇḍariyā, right outside Lakṣmaṇa and back inside Pārśvanātha temple; Right inner Pradakṣiṇā Kāṇḍariyā temple; left Pradakṣiṇā Kāṇḍariyā temple.



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